The art of FLORAL DESIGNING

William Cleaver Harry

NATURE AND ART

THE ART OF
Floral Designing

A TEXTBOOK
IN THE ARRANGEMENT OF FLOWERS
AND FLORAL DECORATIONS AS
PRACTICED IN RETAIL
FLORISTRY

A revised and greatly enlarged edition of the former MANUAL OF FLORAL DESIGNING

By

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Dedication

The Author Gratefully Acknowledges Much Inspiration and Help in Past Years from Careful Perusal of Articles and Discussions Appearing in "The Florists Exchange and Horticultural Trade World" and Inscribes This Volume in Appreciation to

Mr. A. T. De La Mare

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PUBLISHERS' FOREWORD

The *Manual of Floral Designing*, by which title this book was formerly known, was first published in 1919, and came in response to a great need for a practical handbook in the fundamentals of retail floristry. Prior to this, no such work had been compiled, although much space—too little for the demand—had been given in trade journals by those in the line who endeavored to give others the benefit of their discovery and practice.

From an artistic standpoint, every florist in the retail business is responsible for the advance or decline of floral designing. It is obvious, then, that anything that will help bring about a better interpretation of the art will be welcome.

William Cleaver Harry, the author, has spent much time and has given much thoughtful attention to the preparation of this thoroughly revised and uptodate edition which now deservedly takes its place under the title of *The Art of Floral Designing*.

Mr. Harry is well qualified to present the art and science of floral arrangement. He possesses a background of early experience under glass, where he probably would have remained but for the discovery of his inclinations and talent for the make-up table by his employer, who

admonished him thus: "My boy, you are wasting your time here! You belong in the store!"

Of the next step, that of retail store experience, our author says: "Experience is an excellent teacher, but experience alone, without a textbook is a slow, tedious journey. After several years of store work, filled with glaring blunders and much hard labor, I began to realize that the arrangement of flowers is an art based on principle and method and that an understanding of this leads to improved ways of working and to greater discovery on the part of the student."

A. T. De La Mare Co. Inc.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

THIS volume presents a concise but complete treatise on the art of floral arrangement. For those seeking an opportunity to look into the florist's calling, as well as the workers in flowers who have already found their right place and earnestly desire to keep growing, this book will be interesting, helpful and inspiring.

Not all who work in floral art are artists. This title has been reserved for those who by their works shall be known. Who, then, is qualified to judge in floral symmetry and that deep mystery of color harmony?

The lessons in this book are basic. They begin at the beginning and cover all points of arrangement from the preparation of the material to the finished piece.

A knowledge of the principles of floral arrangement, owing to the high degree of specialization which every business of any size manifests and which confines many employees to a narrow routine of duties, can hardly be obtained in one's personal experience only. To you who find yourselves within the walls of routine and the necessity of sticking to the daily task, let me say: the opportunities for greater practice and further advancement are always extended to those who are students and who prove themselves such in their present assignment.

As a reference work of far reaching importance, the author recommends the greatest of all albums of floral art, *Floral Designs De Luxe*. It is a wonderful picture gallery of commercial floral subjects. Frequent reference thereto will well repay one, supplying ideas for present and future work. It contains a host of novelties for the florists' big days; the old classics, the informal and large decoration, as well as the offerings of many floral arrangers of this day and time, are all portrayed therein.

William Cleaver Harry.

Philadelphia, Pa.
May, 1930.

CHAPTER I

The Floral Designer

A Survey Showing the Art of Arrangement as the First Qualification of the Retail Florist . . . Class Demonstration with and without a Textbook . . . The Discovery and Presentation of the Working Principle in Floral Designing

The florist business may be grouped in three grand divisions, namely: First, the production of flowers and plants; second, the wholesale distribution; third, the retail distribution, the retail florist representing the whole trade to the public. The last named may also be a producer and grow the greater portion of his stock. Indeed, the quotation, "We grow our own flowers," may be more and more employed as a slogan of outstanding service.

To the average citizen, flowers are flowers, but all florists may not be so broadly classified. The foremost members of this trade are unquestionably those known as master floral arrangers. This one major activity is reflected throughout the whole establishment and constitutes the impression upon which the judgment of the public is given.

The ability of the floral designer comes more as the result of his own unfoldment than by accretion. This ability is not a matter of person or the assumption of personality. The three channels through which the

demonstration is made are application, practice and keen observation. Just as the student of music advances by his unfoldment as a listener, so the ambitious floral worker sees his work improve in harmony of color, form and outline.

Class Demonstration

To have the privilege of watching a master designer make up a wedding bouquet, a charming corsage or a beautiful basket is an opportunity well worth going miles to see; but it may mean little to the observer if rudimentary work has not been done to prepare thought to grasp the benefits of the teacher's effort. Said one who attended a demonstration school in the metropolis: "One thing I learned, and that was that the bloom of Privet hedge could be effectively used in a wedding bouquet." The real point gained was that the novice saw clearly that other flowers besides Roses, even plebeian hedge flowers, could be used with beauty and effectiveness under the touch of the hand of the artist, who saw beyond the veil of custom and tradition. The demonstrator had trained himself to think, but it did not follow that he could pass his own unfoldment to those who watched his creative work. What is the secret of the master designer? Yes, the mental principle that guides the hand may be called a secret until the time when it is revealed as the principle of the art of floral arrangement. This principle now comes to you through the first textbook on this subject.

It is indeed a privilege to be associated with so noble a calling as a dispenser of merchandise that never fails to

symbolize the better side of life. Can you picture flowers, "the smiles of God," spreading depression, discouragement, unhappiness or illness? No one mistakes the language of flowers—no one ever has—no one ever will mistake that message. Pause for a moment and reflect on the daily round of "Say it with flowers" with its hourly message of good tidings.

The Principle

You ask me at this point to give you a definition of the title of floral artist. From the basis of practice, a floral artist is one who makes each arrangement different; whose work will stay together and not break in the middle when handled; who works without agonizing motions; one who knows when a piece is finished both by cost and art, and who begins slowly and finishes quickly. What, then, is the power behind the hand that deftly transforms a heap of loose flowers of many forms and colors in a cluster of harmony, beauty and grace? When I pressed for an answer to the question as to what quality of thought directed and guided this work, the reply came from the worker on the job: "I do not know how to help you—just keep on and the way will come." And so the way opened to the discovery of this mental quality in my own thought, until one day the recognition came full and clear in these words: "*Constructive imagination*, the architect of floral designing."

Now turn to your dictionary and you will be amazed to learn of the far reaching import of this major faculty.

Webster defines it thus: "The image making power; the power to create or reproduce an object of sense previously perceived; the power to reconstruct or recombine the materials furnished by experience." "Imagination consists in taking parts of our own conceptions and combining them into new forms and images more select, more striking, more delightful than those of ordinary nature." This ability is ours for using it; a part of our natural bornness. The way to develop one's imagination, as applied to floral art, is to exercise it. Imagination in its true concept can never be confused for its counterfeit, day dreaming. Imagination gives unity to variety and sees all things in one. Isn't that the master designer as he groups the many varieties of flowers in response to the imperative demand for new creations?

The Florist Must Be Versatile

We often hear it said that so and so will never amount to anything because he or she is too clever. The theory underlying this doctrine would seem to be that each person is equipped with a limited amount of ability which cannot be developed beyond a certain point. People of widely diversified genius exercise an inevitable charm on the imagination of mankind. In the florist business he who can do anything does everything. The work is filled with expanding interests and every interest is a potential talent; and every talent an opportunity for growth, discovery and progress for the individual who will give free reign by using his native latent ability. Genius

is seldom limited to skill in a single line, but like light in a dark house, shines through whatever openings it can find, whether doors or cracks. Wherever one's interests lie, in that direction he is is most likely to excel, for what is ability other than intelligence applied to interest? And there is no limit to the amount of intelligence one may bring to a given task.

Prof. H. B. Dorner of the University of Illinois said, in one of his instructive lectures: "Success in the flower business depends upon our methods of carrying on our business; upon the quality of stock we carry; upon the perfection of the arrangements we send out and upon our efficiency in packing and delivery." While perfection of the arrangments is our topic for instruction, it is not secondary to the quality of the stock and the dependability of the service. By letting our light shine with realization and inspiration, we are giving constructive imagination an opportunity to unfold through us in better ways, leading to the discarding of ancient and wasteful methods of working.

We are now ready to apply the creative, penetrating power of imagination to the work of the hands.

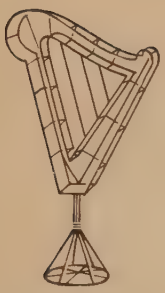
CHAPTER II

Preparatory Work—Wire Frames

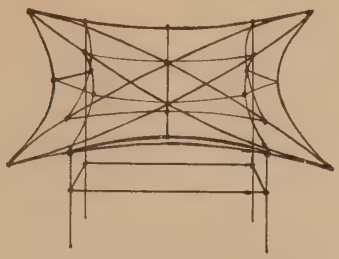
PRIMARILY, the florist was called upon to use his skill in only two kinds of floral work; namely, designs and bouquets. From these two types of arrangements, all creations made on wire frames, from wreaths to large standing emblems, were later classified under the heading of floral designs and a much broader class under the term bouquets, which has expanded to include every conceivable basket arrangement for all occasions. Funeral sprays, colonial bouquets, wedding bouquets, debutante and commencement bunches, etc., are also included, and the working principle is the same in all.

Only Two Types of Wire Frames

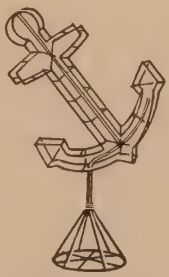
Formal designs, which include everything made on mossed frames, preserving a definite outline, are often referred to as "set pieces." Some stores have only occasional calls for these and, wherever possible to do so, suggest sprays and baskets to their trade; but set designs always have been used and always will be used, both for funerals and occasions when a special floral emblem is ap-



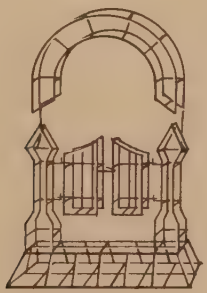
Harp on base



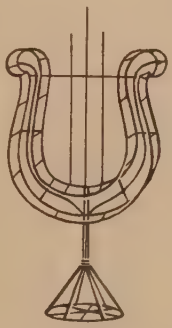
Standard pillow frame



Anchor on base



Gates ajar



Lyre on base

FIG. 1—WIRE FRAMES

propriate. In times of scarcity of greenhouse grown stock, set designs are very profitable and therefore good business.

Wire frames (Fig. 1) are obtainable from florist supply houses or direct from wire workers in large cities. Every conceivable accessory, such as baskets, prepared foliage, Christmas wreaths, ribbon, novelties, etc., are furnished to the retailer from supply houses devoted exclusively to the florist trade.

Wire frames present only two outlines, straight and curved; in other words, a straight edge and an arc.

The wire framemaker has two styles, the flat frame and the box frame. The box frame has a double wire on the edge, making it easier to moss and more secure, and is always used when a sharp outline is demanded, as in emblems.

It is a good plan to carry a line of frames of representative sizes in stock. Besides these, carry some extra wire bases for mounting wreaths, etc., when you have no combination frame in stock. Keep some wire tripods and a couple of wooden easels in your store room; also the large frames of "vacant chair," "broken columns," "gates ajar," etc. Equip your tool box with a complete outfit for cutting and changing frames. This outfit should consist of a pair of large combination wire cutters and pliers, a chisel and a roll of No. 15 wire for lashing the sections together.

To Moss a Pillow Correctly

The fundamental principle in set designs is clearness of outline. No matter how elaborate your treatment in the making, this principle must be strictly observed. Many square, shapeless pillows are not entirely due to the eye of the designer, but to the mossing of the frame. Let an artist be given a frame that is not mossed properly and see what happens. Almost anyone in the store can moss a pillow frame after he learns how. Obviously, a well-made design must begin with the mossing.

The pillow is a representative design. In mossing this frame, first cover the back on the inside with heavy wrapping paper or foil. For tying material use florists'

green thread and draw loops tightly. Green wood moss, when obtainable, is the best for all frames, although you may use Sphagnum moss all the year. After the frame is mossed, if it is to be put away for future use, do not wet it, for when it dries out again the moss will be as hard as a cinder. Soak the mossed frames when ready to use and allow the excess water to run out.

Begin mossing at the upper righthand corner, making it full and deep like the bow of an inverted boat. Use the left hand for holding the moss in place, while you wrap with the right. Make just enough turns with the thread to make it firm. After finishing one corner, do the lower one on the right and then the other two. Be sure to have them all alike. Then fill the center, piling the moss in with the right hand and pressing into place with the left. When the center is filled, molded into a solid mass and tied, go over it with shears and clip off the ragged edges. If the job is good the work will be smooth and rounded, tapering from the highest point in the center to the four corners. If it is flat and uneven, with soft spots, holes and ridges, where the corners join the body of the pillow, it is a poor job and will not pass.

See that the edges are filled full so the edging of fern leaves will not drop out. There is nothing about mossing that should require any special mention, yet this operation is of vital importance. Anyone who understands how to moss a pillow properly can moss any frame as well. The main points to remember and observe are evenness and proportion; that is, the moss as filled in should be neither too thick nor too thin for the size of the frame.

CHAPTER III

Lessons in Stemming with Practice Studies

LITTLE, BUT IMPORTANT, STEPS IN PREPARATION OF THE MATERIAL

ONE of the first questions asked of the applicant for a position in a flower shop is, "Can you stem?" Oftentimes, the possession of a knowledge of stemming and enough practice therein to keep one from breaking the heads off the Roses will secure the opportunity desired. This primary step, stemming, is sometimes spoken of as wiring flowers.

More than one flower lover, with zeal not tempered by wisdom, deciding to take a plunge into the florist business, has declared, "I will do no wiring in my store!" Such a decision would be on a line with the attitude of a good tailor, who has suddenly reversed the tailoring art by deciding that his cloth was too fine to be supported by haircloth and padding in the coats he would make in the future. Tailors do not especially feature their hidden work to their customers, but point to the finished garment. So also the florist should not send out made-up work with exposed wires, which often excite expressions

Fig. 2—Stemming Roses

Roses for medium length work should be stemmed first and then wood picked to enter in the moss. When used short, they can be wired through the calyx and double pronged with same length of wire. Pick off a couple of leaflets from down the stem and fasten up under the flower as the wire is used

Fig. 3—Stemming Bedding—Flat Work

When Carnations, Asters, Chrysanthemums, etc., are used flat on the moss for outlining or bedding, use No. 19 or 20 wire through the calyx, and bend as a hairpin. The double wire will prevent the flower from turning or loosening. When these flowers are used on their own stems for set pieces, use wood picks

Fig. 4—Opening the Petals of Tulips

In using Darwin Tulips for variety of form, you may turn the petals, and obtain an open flower effect, like the Dogwood bloom

FIG. 5—CORRECT METHOD OF STEMMING ROSES, CALLAS, CARNATIONS, CHRYSANTHEMUMS, ASTERS, DAHLIAS, ETC. FOR SPRAYS AND GENERAL WORK RETAINING FULL LENGTH STEM

Hold the Rose between the thumb and fingers of the left hand and enter the wire in the calyx with the right hand. Push wire through and turn the end down one quarter of an inch with the thumb of the left hand. Then turn the wire on down the stem with the thumb and fingers of the right hand. Do not wrap the leaves under the wire, although you may strip off the bottom foliage if too heavy. This is the proper method of stemming, using finger and hand motions only

FIG. 6—INCORRECT METHOD OF STEMMING

The overarm movement is clumsy, slow and laborious and risks injury to the flower. Handle all flowers carefully. Cover the top of the work table with paper, whether the top be wood, metal or marble. Paper (newspaper is good) will hold moisture and also serve as a cushion for the material while you are working and as a protection against dust. Furthermore, covering the table top with damp paper enables you to clean quickly by rolling the scrap in the paper and recovering. Always clean up by strict rule. Good work is not possible where barnyard conditions are permitted

FIG. 7—BRIDLING ROSES

To prevent partly open Roses from expanding still further, a light wire is looped through the petals near the base instead of through the calyx. Where it is necessary to bridle to prevent the petals from falling, a double bridle may be used—two wires from opposite sides crossing in the heart of the flower. This operation is a legitimate one and is valuable in design work, particularly in the warm season. The work must be neatly done, so that the shape of the flower is not changed in any way. Roses that are stale from long standing should not be bridled, but thrown in the rubbish bin

of pity and horror. Keep your steel girders covered! The finer greens used in spray and design work are there to hide unsightly wires as well as to accentuate colors and heighten the effect.

A supported stem will not wilt or shrink as quickly as one without the support of the proper gauge wire. We shall see later on how necessary this operation is to giving a natural appearance to arrangements—not the rigid, stilted, artificial look which many good people attribute to the wiring of the flowers. The stiff, set look just mentioned is not brought about because the flowers are stemmed, but rather this condition can be traced to the designer's lack of understanding of the principles of floral arrangement, which are grace, symmetry and proportion.

To tie up a cluster of a choice assortment of Spring flowers, say, without any stemming, is a temptation that one must resist. We make exception to orders for immediate use and rush orders!

Be on your guard against forming the habit of throwing work together without careful and thorough preparation. I recall an incident of a wreath made by a lazy designer who used a lot of Ward Roses (an extremely brittle Rose), stemmed in clusters on wood picks, without any wiring to the buds. The wreath was beautiful when it left the store, but it was a sorry sight less than two hours later—it consisted of many stems and few Roses. If more florists could see their sprays after they have been handled by other hands—distorted, wilted, flowers upside down, the whole like a bunch of rags—they would give more time to the mechanical side of floracraft.

FIG. 8

STEMMING LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY

Place the flower spikes well above the leaf. This method is employed for Sweet Peas, Pompons, etc., when these are used in mossed frames. The patent wired woodpick, dyed green, is furnished by florist supply houses

FIG. 9

TWO PRONG TWIST FOR DAFFODILS

Daffodils, Dutch Tulips and many varieties of fleshy stemmed Spring flowers may be handled quickly for general design work with the two prong twist. If preferred, woodpicks may be used

FIG. 10—SINGLE WIRE TWIST

A method for stemming Spring flowers and miscellaneous stock when used in single stems. Turn a loop at the base of the flower and then twist wire down the stem, same as Rose method

FIG. 11—HARD STEMMED FLOWERS ON WOOD PICKS

Pompon Chrysanthemums, Lilium speciosum and a large variety of hard stemmed flowers are caught on the toothpick with wire and require no wiring up the stem. Lilac, Heather and all woody stems may be entered in mossed frames by sharpening the stems with a diagonal cut. For basket work, Gladiolus need no stemming, but in sprays they are wired down the stem so that they can be bent in desirable positions when tying. When beheaded for short work use two prong wiring or wood picks

For stemming, use only the best grade of smooth finished box wire, annealed for florists' use exclusively. Its peculiar soft texture enables the stemmer to turn quickly and wrap tightly without cracking the stems.

FIG. 12—HARDY FERNS STEMMED ON NO. 19 WIRE WITH HAIRPIN CLUTCH

as explained in Chapter 4, under "Edging with Ferns," page 24. Fern leaves may be stemmed by this method, especially when the leaves are undersized, for spray work and edging large mossed frames

FIG. 13—STEMMING FOR COLONIAL BOUQUETS AND WEDDING WORK

To reduce the thickness of the stem in formal round bouquets (Colonials) and bride's bouquets, cut stems to 3 inch lengths for round bouquets and from 3 inches to 6 inches long in the bridal shower and turn a double prong on the ends before making up. With a single wire Roses would twist and turn, causing the bouquet to gap open in places when carried

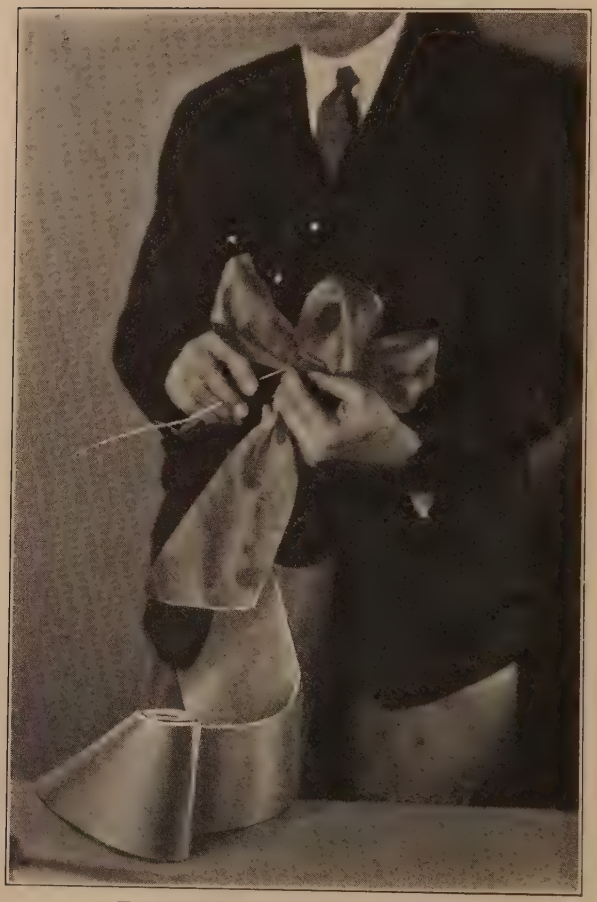


FIG. 14—MAKING THE RIBBON BOW
See opposite page

How to Make a Ribbon Bow

The proper way to use ribbon in floral work is to make the bow, not to tie it. Make a loop a short distance from the end, pleat across the ribbon with the fingers of the left hand, while the loop is held in the right. Proceed to make the loops, catching them in the middle with the first one you make. When you have as many loops as you wish, turn a wire round the middle where the thumb and finger hold them. With a twist of the wire, you have a milliner's bow. Attach this to the spray by running the end of the wire under some of the stems, pull it up tightly and fasten. Now pull the loops taut. This will give a drawn look to the bow and make it appear as if it were tied very tightly down among the flowers and were holding them together. Do not try to tie the bow knot and then fasten it on; it is impossible to sink the knot low enough to look right. Be careful of the ribbon effect; it may be a serious fault if not just right.

CHAPTER IV

The Pillow

THE RIGHT BEGINNING . . . STEPS FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE FINISHED DESIGN EXPLAINED . . . THE GARLAND PILLOW

THE pillow is perhaps one of the earliest designs used. As an emblem, it belongs to the home and is nearly always ordered by the immediate family; consequently there are more pillows and pillow baskets made than all other designs with the exception of wreaths. Before we begin the construction of this piece, let us first consider some of the personal characteristics that a man or woman should possess to be successful in this vocation.

The business of the retail florist is more exacting than is apparent from the front of the store. His customers all know him to be busy, yet they can think of no order that could possibly demand such immediate and exacting service as their order. Much is therefore expected of the storeman and his assistants. Take a mental inventory of yourself. See if you have the following qualities in stock. If you have them all in good supply, you are well equipped and the technique of designing will be easy. If short or lacking in some of them, do not despair; they

Fig. 15—Pillow—Formal Style. Solid Massive Arrangement Made for the Unusual Order

can be developed by practice. The price is continued effort.

Four Desirable Qualifications

First: Be able to think and to plan. To be able to think quickly on your feet is essential, for the floral designer is ever a footworker.

Second: You must be able to picture the work mentally before it is begun. This is the faculty of imagination and is priceless. Without the aid of the mental architect your materials would lie useless before you.

Third: The maker-up must have a good eye, even the eye of an artist. Observe, read, watch what is being used and worn. Look for color in everything and you will soon be able to recognize pleasing combinations readily and detect lack of harmony.

Fourth: You must be quick and decisive. It takes practice to do this, and while you should move quickly, you must never hurry.

In summing up these four personal requisites, let me say that all instruction can ever do, or is intended to do, is to be a guide, just to help you get hold of the true idea. All things that talent does are within the reach of him who wants them enough to work for them.

Foundation Work . . . Edging with Ferns

In mossing the pillow frame, we found that the principal point was evenness and proportion. We are now ready to make up. See preceding chapter. As a setting

FIG. 16—When price is no object, the arrangement may be a loose cluster pillow following the garland design, so that each flower shows as an individual in the setting. This arrangement consists of Orchids, Gardenias, French Lilac and Valley Lilies

for the floral work, it is best to edge all pillow frames with hardy ferns. Some designers omit this, but it adds a great deal to the finished design, by cutting out the view of the back. Take two or three fern leaves in the left hand, place them together like the ribs of a fan, and after breaking off the stem ends, turn a No. 19 wire on them, with a big loop up the back. This is the hair-pin clutch and there is no getting away from it. (See Figure 17, also Figure 12, page 18).

FIG. 17
The hairpin clutch

When you put the ferns in the frame, enter them in the lower edge, with a slight dip downward. Use enough of them and the pillow will look as if it were resting on a bank of fern leaves. Without the use of ferns, the pillow has the appearance of standing unsupported in the air.

It is our desire in these lessons to pay strict attention to the right beginning and to good methods, omitting non-essentials between the beginning of a design and the splendid detail at the finish.

Making a Mixed Pillow

An ordinary mixed pillow, where no attempt is made to carry a special design, requires no special treatment outside of the caution to keep the outline clear. Cover

Fig. 18—A Regulation Pillow of Mixed Flowers
The old classic of moderate price, using short stemmed flowers

the moss with short ends of laurel. This is an efficient method for the foundation. It requires no stemming and fills up so well that it will tighten up the design and make the work last longer, by keeping the air from getting through under the flowers. It is much superior, in every way, to fern leaves tacked flat on the moss.

The lettering can be put on a solid bed in the center, or better still, use adhesive letters on a short piece of ribbon and fasten the latter to suit your taste.

In finishing do not stick a number of Asparagus plumosus tips in among the flowers. This is a common error. The proper use of greens precludes clouding the flowers and making the outline hazy. A little Adiantum used with discretion will give a softening and pleasing effect, but it must not be overdone. The time given for making a mixed pillow, size 20 in., including the mossing, should be one hour, all the work performed by one person.

The Garland Pillow

The pillow of mixed flowers has no special character in its arrangement. In contrast to this is the garland-style pillow which follows a definite plan in its make-up.

In this, we return to our discovery that a pillow design is formed by segments of four circles intersecting each other. (See Figure 19). The pillow is therefore a circular design and all its lines are curved. The garland style should only be used where a good price is given, for it takes considerable material and looks best in larger sizes.

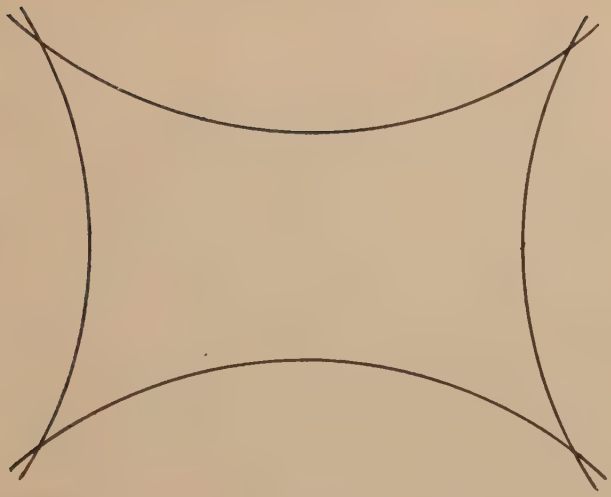


FIG. 19—The space formed by the segments of four circles intersecting is the design of the pillow

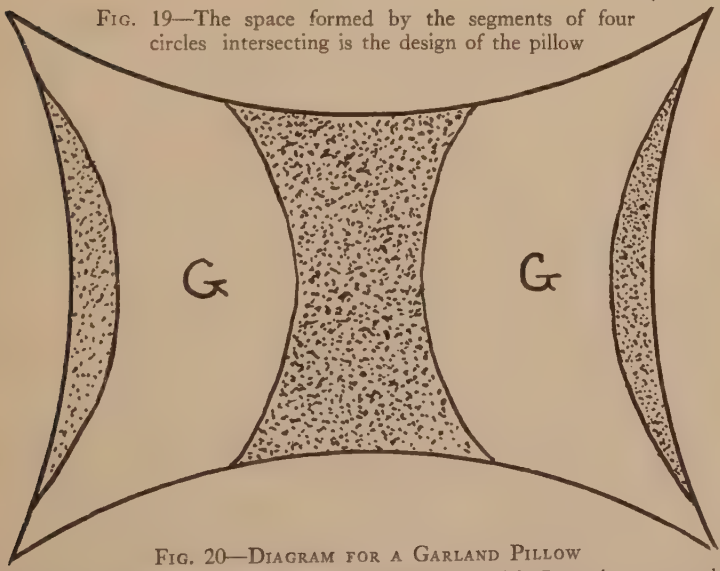


FIG. 20—DIAGRAM FOR A GARLAND PILLOW

The dark spaces show the sections to be filled solid with Carnations or a substitute. The two crescent spaces marked G are to be occupied by Roses, etc., forming the garlands, which run to a point of a single Rose bud, and extend ten or twelve inches beyond the frame at the corners (See illustration of finished design on page 31)

FIG. 21—In this diagram the garlands are reversed, being now on the top and bottom instead of the sides as in Fig. 20. Note that in designing a pillow, every line is a curved line. The old-fashioned pillow design on page 27 is a modification of this diagram and follows the conventional curves of the frame

Fill in the shaded crescents shown in Figures 20 and 21 with solid bedding. This should be as flat as the moss itself in order to emphasize the garlands which fill in the white crescents. Fill these white crescents with Laurel tips, just as in the other frame, but be careful not to have the effect too bushy. To begin the garland, make a thin spray of Roses with 10 in. or 12 in. stems, each Rose wired to keep the head from breaking. Start with one Rose

Fig. 22—The garland style is undoubtedly the masterpiece of the pillow design. Its superb, well defined lines, so well worked out by the floral artist, furnish us with a perfect model. Note the long, crescent shaped garlands extending beyond the corner points of the frame. The depressed center ground gives magnificent emphasis to these garlands, which reach their greatest width and height directly opposite the miniature Orchids which seem to burst from the low center in a dainty, spray like cluster. Nothing in a wire frame design could be more beautiful. Original made by Charles Henry Fox, Philadelphia. (See diagram of this piece on page 29)

and work back, using only about six Roses, and greens. This is the end of the garland. Fasten one end on each corner by running a double wire clear through the corner and twisting it on the back of the frame. Because these hang over like the end of a festoon, there is no danger of their pulling out as would be the case if just stuck in on a wood pick.

Continue these garlands by filling in with open Roses and heavy flowers close to the moss, and top off with the small Roses and trimming flowers, gradually getting higher and wider to the center and then reversing the direction to the opposite corner. These crescents should be pretty full and well rounded with very little green showing. On the 22 in. frame, 100 Roses, 50 in each garland will suffice. Now finish the design by running an edging of any flower, like Sweet Peas, Roman Hyacinths, etc., all around the entire frame. Put them in long and let them hang over the fern leaves forming the base. Put a small cluster, like three orchids, directly in the center of the solid work between the garlands in Figure 20. In Figure 21, where the garlands run the long way, the name can be used on the solid center.

Now stand off and view your work. (See illustration of garland style pillow.) Here is a secret of the studio for detecting defects in symmetry: Stand back a couple of paces, partly close both eyes and look through the lashes. See how the form and lines of the design come before your view in bold relief, as the detail of the flowers is diminished. Try it and see your work as others see it.

Next we will take up some of the various forms of the wreath. Many funeral designs are not in the least artistic, but the wreath has the distinction of being formal, as well as the most beautiful. We shall treat it from both viewpoints.

CHAPTER V

The Wreath

SEVERAL KINDS AVAILABLE . . . THE DECORATED WREATH . . . THE SOLID WREATH . . . THE SHOWER WREATH . . . HOW TO USE THE BOOK OF DESIGNS

THE most useful floral design is the wreath. As an emblem it is universal. The word wreath means garland. In ancient Rome and Greece it was a symbol of victory. In its present-day use, as a funeral token, it still holds the same significance in the conquering of the "last enemy."

In Europe it is the custom to present a laurel wreath to the director of the Royal Opera, a great composer or any other celebrity on some fete occasion as a token of public appreciation. In our large American cities, the conductor of the symphony orchestra is given a similar token, in the form of a wreath of Magnolia leaves, by his musicians at the farewell concert of the season or on some other signal occasion.

As a funeral design the wreath can be made formal or very artistic. It may run in price from $5 to $500. A wreath can be made in as many styles and combinations of flowers as you can think of; in fact, do what you

FIG. 23—Example of Galax wreath decorated with a standard assortment of flowers. The forms can be made up and kept in stock ready to be trimmed *By Holm & Olson, St. Paul, Minn.*

will in the treatment of this frame, it will never lose its identity.

The designer who prides himself on his initiative and originality here finds an ever present opportunity.

Classified according to arrangement, we have three distinct styles, namely: The decorated wreath, the solid wreath and the shower wreath.

FIG. 24—COVERING THE MOSS FILLING WITH A SPIRAL WRAPPING OF GREEN WAXED PAPER

For the average design this method is quick and economical. The moisture of the moss is sealed by the wrapping, but benefits the flower stems which enter the moss through the paper. For large frames and special work, make up directly on the moss and cover the back with foil

The Decorated Wreath

The decorated wreath came into popular use with the introduction of the Galax leaf. Other materials used in foundations are Leucothoe, Laurel, Ivy, Magnolia, Oak and Bay leaves. The last three are chemically prepared and are too well known to need comment. The regular

FIG. 25—FOUNDATION WORK ON MAGNOLIA DECORATED WREATH

Note that three kinds of green are used: Hemlock, Laurel and Asparagus. Use any green at hand, but do not fail to first lay the foundation of greens

crescent wreath frame, with its tapering lines, is best for use in the decorated wreath, which consists simply of a leaf-covered frame, decorated three-fourths of the distance around with a garland of flowers. The style, because of its quickness in preparing and effectiveness, has done more to promote the design business than anything ever introduced.

There are two methods of putting on the leaf foundation. The first is the flat method, by which the leaves are stapled on like shingles. The second is to stem the leaves and enter them in the moss in a slanting position. The first method gives a close woven base, which should be made evenly. Be sure and pick out the smallest leaves for the narrow side and use the large ones in the wide base opposite. When the leaves are all in the frame it will present a very massive appearance, with proportions of width and depth. All decorated wreaths look well with only a few flowers, but can be made as heavy and elaborate as desired.

The Solid Wreath, or All Flower Wreath

Two examples of all flower wreaths in the solid style are shown in Figures 26 and 27. These designs are well received by all classes of trade. They must be very flowery and full and therefore are not cheap. The use of color adds much to the impression.

Funeral designs are just as much in use as ever. Styles and customs alone change the manner of usage.

The old-fashioned formal wreath, with its edging of Smilax and Rose Leaves, its close-cropped filling of Roses,

FIG. 26—SOLID ALL FLOWER CRESCENT WREATH
Part of the ribbon work can be omitted without lessening the effectiveness

FIG. 27—A COMBINATION OF CHOICE FLOWERS IN THE FORM OF A CRESCENT WREATH

FIG. 28—STANDING SHOWER WREATH OF ROSES, LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY AND ADIANTUM FERNS WITH BASE OF CHRYSANTHEMUMS

Carnations, Alyssum and what-not, is no longer made in the larger stores of the city, but it will always be a good medium for using up the odds and ends about the small place, with its own greenhouses.

Shower Wreath

When several wreaths are ordered for the same funeral, and we wish still more variety, we have the shower wreath. This is the third style under our classification, and while it may be said to be somewhat freakish, it nevertheless represents a fixed idea in designing. The shower has doubtless been given to the wreath from the bouquet in an attempt to relieve the monotony of the circle. The wedding bouquet and the funeral wreath are in no way related. When you make the shower wreath, use narrow ribbons in the shower.

Wreaths of Ornamental Foliage

While all the varied forms and combinations come under the three classifications of decorated, solid and shower wreaths, we are occasionally called upon to furnish something still different and we make a wreath entirely of foliage. This design belongs to the decorated wreath class.

The wreath is the most profitable design. With the wealth of material available at all times, it is up to the retailer if he doesn't make money. The leading supply houses now carry and offer mossed frames in all sizes,

FIG. 29—WREATH OF CROTON LEAVES AND ORNAMENTAL FOLIAGE

covered with Magnolia or Oak, all ready to make up. With these foundations on hand, the making of a beautiful design is but the matter of a few minutes, while with emblems and other set designs, several hours are required to bring them to completion. Which is the most profitable?

FIG. 30—An unusual combination of Pansies, a wreath surpassingly beautiful and not made every day

How to Use the Book of Designs in the Store

Not all storemen use their book of floral designs as it should be used. The first thing to remember is that it is not intended that you should sell reproductions of the designs in the book. These designs are suggestive only, and the purpose is not to show how to make up. Suppose, now, that you are using "Floral Designs De Luxe"! This book covers a wide range, in fact, the whole range of floral art, so do not hand it to your customer to look at. Find out first what the customer has in mind. If he has nothing special in view, suggest something, and then turn directly to the page where it is shown. Handle the book yourself. Begin at once to talk, while the picture holds your customer's attention. Go on with your suggestions as to the kind of flowers, according to available stock, etc. Make no specific reference to the picture. You are not selling photographs, for flowers are flowers to most people, and it is better to have it remain so. Watch for and expect increased interest from your customer, for that is just what the design book is intended to do. It will postpone the close of the sale until the customer's confidence and interest is so great that he decides to get a $15 design instead of a $10 one. The album will always secure favorable attention. It will increase interest as shown, but it remains with you to close the sale into a profitable one.

CHAPTER VI

Emblems

CHOICE OF METHODS . . . AMUSING DESIGNS WANTED BY CUSTOMERS . . . KEEP YOUR POISE . . . DON'T TAKE THE FAULT-FINDER TOO SERIOUSLY

GENERALLY speaking, all floral designs are emblems. The cross, the anchor, star, crescent, crown and horse-shoe are all emblems, yet under our treatment of this subject we must draw a line between these designs and emblems proper, as known in the trade.

Designs in general, both large and small, mounted or unmounted, need no different treatment from the pillow and wreath. The principle, that of correctness of outline, is the same in all, and in a good understanding of this principle there will be no crosses with rounded corners, neither will the points of the star, the anchor, etc., be bounded by curved edges, instead of running to a well defined point. So important is this that once your eye is trained to correct observance, you may be said to have mastered the art of floral designing.

We shall now take up the subject of those stereotyped designs that we call emblems, by beginning with a definition. A floral emblem is a copy in flowers, of something

FIG. 31—MASONIC EMBLEM OF CARNATIONS, ROSES AND IVY

emblematic. It may be taken from a lodge button, or it may be an original design depicting a symbol, scene or historical event. In copying the design of an emblem, the facsimile should carry a marked accuracy of outline, proportion and color. In view of this fact, it is often necessary to resort to the use of certain materials, besides flowers, where it is impossible to use them.

In making emblems, the florist must be a craftsman. He must have inventive ability and adaptability.

Emblems are not always made for funeral use. In fact, the floral artist, especially the one who adds the title of decorator to his name, is likely to be called on at any time for something original. If his interpretation is a good one, it may bring him everlasting fame in his community and a reputation that cannot be bought by paid advertising.

A floral emblem is an inspiring object to look at when it is well done, but when some sacred object or personality is burlesqued under the name of art, it is irreverent. When my old friend designed a bust of George Washington for the show window, on Feb. 22, he got his concepts mixed and the result gave "The immortal George" a perfect likeness of the Sphinx. He had confused his geography with his history. But the climax came when an innocent bystander said: "What is the idea of the snow-man in the window?"

Two Ways of Making Emblems

An order for a certain emblem often means much thought, planning and time. This class of work should

carry a proportionate increase in price of 75 to 100 per cent over regular designs of the same size. There are two ways to handle the practical part of the work. The

FIG. 32—Knights of Columbus floral banner of Roses, Chrysanthemums, Ferns and Smilax

first one is to use a wire frame made by an experienced wire worker. If the finished design is a success, part of the credit should go to the wire man.

Emblem making is like embroidering. The object is to get the outline perfect. If the design is small, use small flowers, massing them as evenly as beads. An edging of green is permissible with nearly all emblems, but it must be close and firmly set. Cut the flowers without any stem and bed right on the moss without any covering unless it be flat fern leaves. (See chapter 3 on stemming.)

The second plan in emblem making, and one widely used, is to make your design on a mossed panel, usually rectangular form, covered with some foundation material, as Magnolias or ferns.

In following this method, first make a pencil sketch of the emblem. In some cases it may be advisable to cut a paper pattern. The simplest method is to lay out the figure in toothpicks stuck in the moss, to give you an idea of the proportion and about how much space is needed. This work is really a mechanical operation and requires a good, accurate eye. If you have a correct idea of what you are doing, you will have no trouble in moving your material until it looks right.

Absurdity in Emblems

In taking orders for this kind of work, every florist has had some amusing experiences. I know one thing, and that is this: The florist business should never be taken too seriously. I know more than one who gets all worked

FIG. 33—PANEL EMBLEM WITH ELABORATE DECORATION

up over an order which seems to him of momentous importance, while the same work to a man of poise would be only routine. Obstacles of all kinds disappear before one who is self-possessed. As a panacea for nervousness, don't take yourself or your business too seriously. Be strict in arranging details beforehand, but don't be over-anxious about results.

Some years ago a prominent butcher in our town passed away. His sons, who were his associates in business, decided to get something appropriate in a floral emblem, so they ordered a cleaver and knife designed in red Carnations, on a solid panel of white Carnations.

For the same occasion the "Rod and Reel Club" wanted to order a trout pole in flowers and the fire company a fire club, with a coil of hose around it. Compromises were effected on these two, but the proposition was not an easy one.

Later on in my career, a gentleman, with a very vivid imagination, wanted to order a jaw, full of teeth, to be passed over the footlights at the commencement exercises of a dental college. This is why I say don't take your business too seriously!

An Admonition

A little word of caution, valuable to all alike, is not out of place here. Do not take any stock in the customer who comes to you with a tale of woe about how he was treated by another florist. He may have a complaint that is justifiable, but try to lead him to a broader view-

point. If the opportunity presents itself, defend your brother florist, but only in a suggestive way. Don't smile, because the laugh may be on you. Sooner or later you will be the next victim. I never knew this to fail. There is absolutely no one in this line of business who does not get into trouble over things for which he is in no way responsible. In other words, he is accused of sending out stock that is not fresh. To the one who does his best there is no penalty. For every customer that condemns you unjustly, you will get two new ones, so don't take your business too seriously, and as it is a poor rule that is not reversible, do not judge your assistants too harshly. Error is only as bad as you make it, and again, the very next order that goes wrong may be one that you filled yourself!

CHAPTER VII

Baskets

FUNDAMENTAL LESSONS IN BASKET ARRANGEMENTS . . . BASKETS AS FUNERAL DESIGNS . . . THE PILLOW BASKET

FROM emblems to baskets may seem like a big step. In basket work, as treated in this lesson, the method of arrangement is the very opposite of that used in emblems.

Since the object of these lessons is to present a complete treatise, the instruction, to be practical, must include the principle of every design now in use or any that might be introduced later on.

When we began to formulate the art of floral designing, I thought that it would be necessary to take up the making of large designs, such as "Vacant Chair," "Broken Column," "Mounted Cross" and all spectacular emblems, in separate lessons. Our research, however, led us on to the discovery, that there are only three representative designs, namely: The pillow, the wreath and the emblem. The principle in these, with its practical application to other designs, is the same.

The fundamental principle, as before given, in all set-piece designing, is exactness of outline and perfect proportion. This, together with the method of mossing,

stemming, foundation laying, outlining, bedding, garland-making and the proper use of greens, is the same throughout the whole range of set-piece work. A knowledge of these, combined with careful practice, brings

FIG. 34—BASKET OF ROSES, DELPHINIUMS, SPIRAEAS AND LILIES WITH FERNS
An outstanding floral arrangement specially designed for mortality occasions

FIG. 35—BASKET FILLED FOR ANY OCCASION

the art to your finger tips, whether the design is a familiar one or not.

Baskets Easier to Make than Designs

The basket arrangement is a broad subject. In some localities, baskets for funeral tokens have been in regular use for many years. In other places they are never thought of by the florist or his customer.

There is no reason why florists everywhere should not use baskets for funerals alternately with designs and sprays. Set designs are often rejected by customers and sprays are in danger of being overdone. What then shall we suggest to our patrons? The basket, made according to modern methods, furnishes an easily constructed, artistic and practical arrangement that answers the question.

In the old days of short stem and stemless stock, basket arrangements were not as practicable as the regulation wire designs. Now, the order is reversed and it is often difficult to obtain enough short material to make some designs profitable. All florists, even the low-priced stores, carry a good grade of stock at all times, which is often too good for ordinary set piece work. It must be used, however, and often at a sacrifice.

In baskets, you not only make a profit on flowers, but sell accessories as well, for baskets are merchandise, bought to sell again, the same as jardinieres and flower bowls. It adds much to the year's business to be able to sell a hundred dollars' worth of baskets at a profit of 100 per cent.

FIG. 36—EASEL FUNERAL BASKET

Receptacles and How to Fill Them

All baskets are now made with metal liners. In the old style receptacles, no containers for water were provided. They were mossed and each flower was wired on a woodpick and put in, one at a time. The whole operation was slow and crude. The finished piece lacked grace and naturalness.

We do not recommend using miscellaneous shapes and sizes for this purpose. Eliminate all baskets like the small tumbler and all shapes, large or small that upset easily.

FIG. 37—Tin vase water container, painted green, used in basket make-up for short stems. A valuable aid

The small models, either round or elliptical, filled with childish flowers, like Daisies, Sweet Peas and miniature Roses, are appropriate for children, but never for persons of mature years. Large baskets that stand on the floor are very effective. They have high handles that offer a good opportunity for decoration when you are filling them. For greens in tall baskets, use tall, thin Cycas Palms. For flowers, use Lilies, hybrid Tea Roses, Chrysanthemums, Delphiniums, Snapdragon, etc. All flowers are appropriate. Use flowers that are available, and then choose a combination harmonious in form and color.

The method of putting the flowers and greens together, as used by the modern store man, is simplicity itself. Very little preparation or stemming is needed; often,

FIG. 38—FUNERAL BASKET ARRANGED BY WILLIAM CLEAVER HARRY
Three tin, cone-shaped vases of different sizes were used in the construction work to insure keeping qualities of the flowers, to give grace and good lines, to prevent a flat and even appearance, and, lastly, to prevent gaping, by which is meant the exposing of the bare necks of the stems in the cluster. See text

none at all. Do not put moss in the metal lining. First fill it nearly full of water. Tin cemetery vases for water may be used at base of handles to give altitude to the flowers. All stems should be in water. Then place in the tin liner a few pieces of Laurel for bushing. Gather the flowers in your left hand, arranging them in the kind of cluster that your eye tells you is needed—that is, whether it should be long, loose and straggling, or more closely concentrated—use a little green therein and, when the bunch is completed, turn a wire around the end, just to keep it together and place the cluster, which may be of Roses or a mixture of flowers, in the basket with a

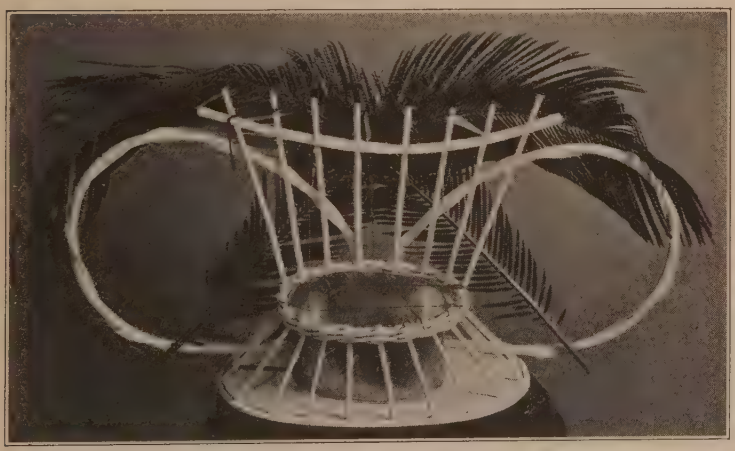


FIG. 39—SPECIAL PILLOW BASKET SHOWING FIRST PREPARATORY STEP
(A basket, designed by William Cleaver Harry, embodying the curved line principle of the conventional pillow frame.)
Cycas leaves are in position and wires are stretched across the liner in checker formation to support the filling

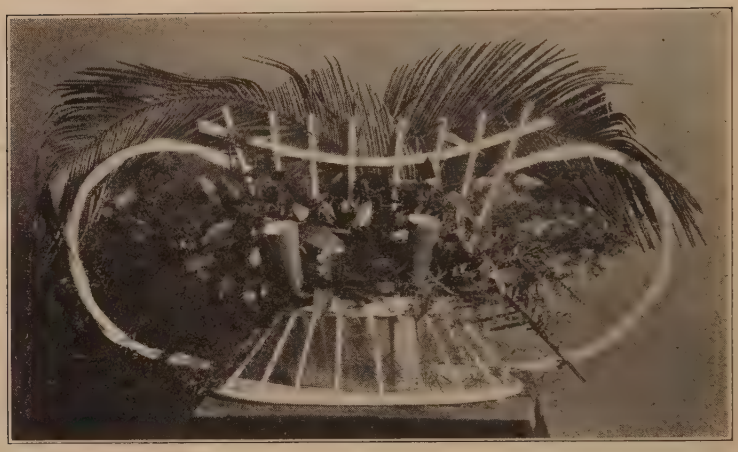


FIG. 40—SPECIAL PILLOW BASKET SHOWING SECOND PREPARATORY STEP
The tin liner is filled with green stubble and two cone vases are in position to receive the small detail flowers. These cones are very helpful in all basket work. They may be placed in any part or position, fastened to basket or just tucked in among the heavy greens. Be sure to fill all liners with water before the flowers are put in. Keep a supply of tin cones on hand. All these items are properties in the mechanics of designing, and are in no way limited in their use to the subjects shown in these illustrations, but are practical in all make-up and in decorating

decisive thrust. Then add other flowers. Lilies, Gladiolus and other flowers for high up in the back or up one side are best put in one at a time. Then add little touches of light green to heighten the effect; greens should never be in evidence.

The basket arrangement is now completed, but before you leave it, run your hands through the flowers, draw them apart, raise a stem here, lower one in another place, add any finishing touches that are needed and put on the ribbon effect.

FIG. 41—SPECIAL PILLOW BASKET—COMPLETED—ARRANGED BY WILLIAM CLEAVER HARRY

All flower stems are in water. Note how the arrangement of the flowers conforms to the lines of the basket. The use of ribbon is optional. This is but another arrangement of the basket shown in illustration on page 65 where the style is one of breadth (latitude)

The Pillow Basket

(Low-shaped baskets in Pillow style, and the specially designed Pillow basket)

Do you not wish you could make up a pillow as quickly and with as little stemming as the basket just described? You can make a low shape basket that will correspond to a pillow or plateau by the same method. For this, use a low basket with a lining, with or without handle. Take a couple of Cycas leaves and wire them so they curl around like an ostrich feather, fastening one on each side of the basket. You can run a guide wire from the basket to the curl in the leaf to steady it; the wire will not show when the piece is finished. You now have a good base for a pillow basket. Run a few wires criss-cross across the top of the tin liner to help hold the stems in position. Fill the tin receptacle a little over half full of water, put in your Laurel bush or ferns and go ahead with the filling as before.

A nice suggestion, particularly in the Summer season, would be to run a row of short Lilium speciosum rubrum around the main stem of the palm leaves. Make the center of the basket a little lower, and come up on the ends with larger flowers like Easter Lilies, something like the upper corners of a pillow.

Stand off and look at your work. It is modern and it is artistic, and you have put it together in half the time it would take to place the flowers singly in a pillow frame.

FIG. 42—SPECIAL PILLOW BASKET IN AN ARRANGEMENT TO GIVE A LATITUDE EFFECT

This is a special design of the pillow basket, and using this name is a needed aid in selling the customer who wants something different. The pillow basket is not intended to displace the mossed frame pillow but stands as an addition to floral arrangements for mortality

Original by William Cleaver Harry

FIG. 43—A BASKET ARRANGED IN PILLOW STYLE

Baskets of flowers regarded from their color combination do not always indicate the occasion for which they are intended. We as floral designers, stress a point, therefore, as in the use of the Cycas leaves, and also in certain subdued color blending, or all white, to carry and convey the impression of appropriateness which will always distinguish one person's work from another. In floral arrangement, as in every calling, it is always the little things that count—the added touches that are beyond the conception of thoughtless workers.

CHAPTER VIII

The Funeral Spray, or Cluster

PREPARATION OF MATERIAL . . . FAULTS TO AVOID IN MAKING UP . . . THE DETAIL CLUSTER AT THE RIBBON BOW . . . FINAL TOUCHES

IT IS said, and truthfully so, that almost any florist can make a good-looking design. This refers, of course, to that class of work where the florist has the guidance of the frame, in which case there is little to do but to follow the lines, like one who copies a drawing through tracing paper. When there are no lines to follow, when the work must all be done free hand, then comes the real test of ability. We have now arrived at this point.

The well-made spray is not common. The inference, therefore, would be that the art in casket bouquets, clusters, ties and sprays (all one and the same), is more difficult to master than that of set designs. In spray-making there are no lines, no outlines, nothing to guide the designer but his mental eye.

The eye trained by careful observation to appreciate and understand definite outline, symmetry and proportion is well equipped for anything in design work, and should not fail in spray making.

The Power Comes from the Imaginative Faculty

There are many good store men who never seem to grasp the correct idea of the spray, though they excel in other branches. The secret behind the hand that transforms a heap of loose material into a cluster of harmony, beauty and grace, is the faculty of the mind known as imagination; the mental architect.

In our study, in tracing effort to cause, we discovered that the power behind all constructive work in floral arrangement began with the imaginative faculty, and that it does not depend upon mere nimbleness of the hands. Those who depend on their hands alone, turn out work that is about as artistic as a billboard. To become a better floral artist, develop your imagination. Strive for improvement in the use of the materials that you may have on hand in store, greenhouse or garden.

Flowers that at one time seemed mediocre and unfit in form and color to use in made-up work, are now recognized as extremely valuable and desirable in commercial floristry.

The humblest flower is enhanced by association and use—by the dignified treatment it receives through your understanding of arrangement.

Sprays Always in Use

Funeral sprays came into favor several years ago for two reasons. The first was, that so many designs were sent that it was an offense to good taste; for instance two "gates ajar" and a great standing lyre (the emblem

of music), to the funeral of a man who was never known to have whistled a tune. Even the florist admitted that the emblems were a little far fetched. Secondly, with the advent of an abundance of long stemmed flowers, which came into favor, we find the florist giving assent to the spray as the universal token. By doing so, the notice, "Please omit flowers," was made to read: "Just send a nice spray," and instead of curtailing his funeral business, he has tripled it.

How Not to Make a Spray

(The error in Spray making)

Sometimes, the best way to make a point clear is to present it from the negative side, like a line in the car ad. of a hatter. The hat man won his point thus: "If any man offers you a better hat than my Hartford Special for $5.00 give him the preference." Let us see then what a good funeral spray should *not* look like. First of all, a spray should be neither compact nor straggly. This applies whether you use a dozen or ten dozen flowers in it. Next, the bunch must not be too blunt or stubby, or long and narrow in its design. The first is the tennis racket and the second is the cat's tail style. Both are equally bad. The next erroneous conception of a spray is the perfectly flat one, and its opposite, the porcupine style, where the flowers having been stemmed on heavy wire, are turned up at right angles to the fern background until they look you fairly in the face. The next

FIG. 44—AN EXAMPLE OF HOW A SPRAY SHOULD NOT BE MADE
See text for explanation of erroneous conception of spray making

FIG. 45—SPRAY OF WHITE ROSES
An example of make-up in Rose leaf design by William Cleaver Harry
Note the reverse garland finishing over the stems (See text for explanation)

erroneous conception is one that would have been good but the designer cut the stems off short at the ribbon and gave it an abrupt appearance. (See Figure 44.) Of two more, one was spoiled by a haze of Asparagus plumosus that covered it, and the other had a weak back and almost fell apart.

The Fundamental Principle

The fundamental principle in spray making is grace and proportion. The spray, to have grace, must have good lines tapering gradually like a Rose leaf. In proportion, it deepens to the center, preserving a long-stemmed effect. (See Figure 45.) The ragged stem ends are gracefully treated with a thin garland from the high center in a reverse position. The ribbon should seem to hold the bouquet together, but should never look like a huge necktie.

Preparing the Stock

Before we make up a spray that will conform to our idea of grace and proportion, let us see to the preparation of the material, for here are a few points that are worth knowing. In this work nearly all flowers require stemming. In a cluster of Roses, stem all of them. (See Chapter III for method.) With Carnations, Callas, Dahlias, Asters and the like, even Chrysanthemums, it is in accord with best workmanship to stem all flowers. Easter Lilies are better if the majority of them have a

FIG. 46—A couplet. The Roses are first stemmed on a medium wire and then caught at the base with a heavier wire to lengthen the stems

wire turned about the necks to make them face about. Where more than two dozen short or medium-stemmed Roses are to be used, they should first be stemmed and then put together in couplets or triplets. (See Figure 46.) It is not possible to make a spray of short-stemmed stock with good lines to it, unless this method is used in order to lengthen the stem and thus prevent evenness.

Take the thorns off or not, just as you like. In Winter they do not stick much, but during the Spring and Summer it is best to scrape the stem ends with a knife. During the Summer, or at such times as Roses are in danger of becoming over developed, it is a good plan to resort to a form of stemming known as bridling. This consists of running a light wire through the petals near the base and turning it down the stem. Sometimes the stemming and bridling are both done with the same wire, but care must be taken not to pinch the flower out of its natural shape. (See practice studies in Chapter III.)

FIG. 47—SPRAY WITH INVERTED CLUSTER USED AS A CREPE SPRAY

Putting the Spray Together

(A talk about greens)

Greens play an important part in the practical side of bouquet work. Some designers use too much green, others not enough. It takes three varieties of greens: fern leaves for back-grounding, Laurel for bushing and raising the center, and Asparagus plumosus or Adiantum ferns, or both, to trace lightly between the flowers.

Short sprays of fresh Hemlock make good backing for the general run of spray work. Always be careful to trace it over with softer greens, so that very little (or better still, none at all) of the evergreen can be seen when the tie is completed.

Many sprays sent out by retailers are too flimsy, lacking volume and substance in the underground of greens. Because of this lack of proper foundation, they do not keep well, there being nothing to hold the moisture and sustain the flowers in their contact with the dry air of the room.

Coontie ferns, California Huckleberry, Leucothoe leaves and fancy ferns are all useful in forming a decorative background for the cluster. Right here I may say that the more rounded sprays are designated as clusters. These are shorter, more rounded and bouquet-like in form. Those made with longer lines, as the Rose leaf outline and favoring the garland, we speak of as sprays.

In the mechanical part of the work there is no difference. It is a mere matter of the versatility of the artist

FIG. 48—CLUSTER STYLE SPRAY

in his interpretation of the art. Be sure that you preserve a good sense of proportion in your interpretation.

Wire Preferred for Tying

No sticks or framework are required. An exception to this might be in a long spray to cover the casket en-

tirely, where a wooden strip would be used as a spine.

Begin the point of the spray with a single Rose on a bit of green and a fern leaf. Use a spool of No. 26 or 28 wire for tying. It is more secure than twine. Do not tie in every Rose. Give a couple of good turns every now and then as you proceed. Place the Roses on the outer edge first, and remember to break the lines so they they never fall two together in a row. With your left hand under the bunch, keep the Roses from hugging too closely, separating the stems with your fingers as you turn the wire to turn them in. The depth of the center should run from 6 in. to 12 in., according to the length and size of the bunch. A large spray will be higher in the center than a smaller one, and remember that a small spray with a high center is worse than one that is flat as a flounder. Grace and proportion—these are the points to observe. Make it look right to your own good taste.

Finishing Over the Stem Ends

Your spray is now completed, except the finishing of the stem ends and the ribbon. (See Chapter III on Bow Making). You should gauge the stock so that you keep out nine or ten Roses for finishing over the rough ends of the stems. Make two loose, rather straggly garlands of these nine or ten Roses. Now fasten these in a reverse position over the stem end of the spray, tying them with a twist of heavy wire around the core or bundle of stems for security against pulling apart. With the shears cut

FIG. 49—EXAMPLE OF CARNATIONS IN CORRECT ARRANGEMENT

the butts of any stems that protrude and put on the ribbon bow directly over the spot where all the stems meet, sheen it with a few choice sprays of green.

Please note that the fact of the Roses running over the stems does not make this what is known as a double spray, the latter consisting of but two sprays tied together, end to end. This is nothing more than a continuation of the high center, just as if you bent some of the long stems down to trim over the rough ones, preventing stubbiness and abruptness. It is one of the main points and should never be omitted from any cluster, no matter how small or what flowers said cluster is made of. (See Figure 45.)

In using palm leaves, fasten the leaves together first and then make up the spray and fasten together. Let the spray have two tips that run part way up the rib of the leaf. In making up Chrysanthemums or other woody stemmed flowers in a spray, tie about two-thirds of them; then break the stems of the remainder, and stab the blooms in the core of the bunch, to raise the center. This is found to be the better method in making large clusters.

Finishing Touches

Never leave the spray as finished until you have fussed with it. Run over the flowers with both hands, twisting, turning, pulling and raising a bloom here or there by stuffing a wad of green under the stem. Do this until it looks right to your own eyes. This is important. It requires but two or three minutes to perform these master touches.

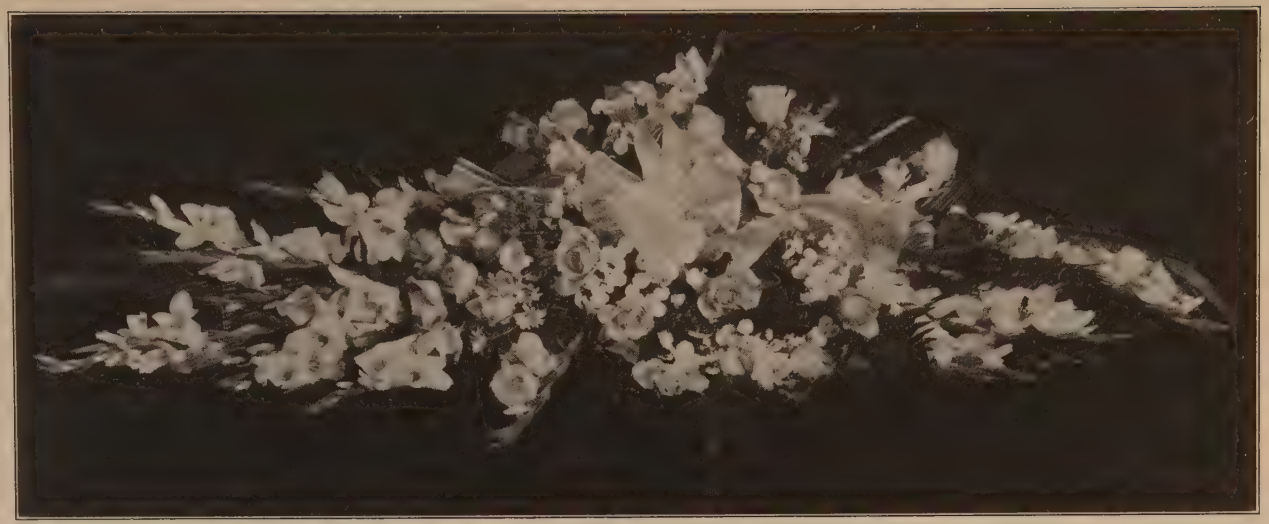


Fig. 50—Showing use of Cycas Leaves in Double Spray

An Added Touch That Counts

Wouldn't you like to know of something in the way of a special detail added to your sprays which would enhance their value? It is the added touch, distinct and different, that counts!

Before you choose the ribbon and make the bow, arrange a small, irregular cluster of some small combination flowers (just a tiny handful for the average spray, and a little larger in proportion for the high priced clusters) and attach by means of a wire through the core of the spray at the gap which the ribbon bow fills. Then, after the detail cluster is nestled in place, draw the wired ribbon bow down tight and arrange the flowers of the detail cluster among the ribbon loops. (See Figure No. 51.)

Giving the Spray Preference

There are at least five good trade reasons for giving the spray preference. The first and best reason is that the public prefers it. If it were only a matter of following the lines of least resistance, it would be, as it always is, an advantage to give people what they want. In this I do not say that people do not want designs at all; but they do not want all the pieces to be designs. Thus, I am making due allowance for the "employees" designs, which will always be with us.

The second advantage in giving preference to the spray is that it enables the store to keep a better quality of cut flowers in the show case. This stock, as you know, can be used in spray work at a profit, even when over-

FIG. 51—CHRYSANTHEMUMS WITH DETAIL CLUSTER OF SWEETHEART ROSES IN CENTER

mature. Therefore, there is the advantage of always having first-class stock to show without fear of losing any of it. Furthermore, it is getting more difficult every year to get enough cheap stock for design work, and the designer finds himself putting more expensive stock into frames; thus, low-priced pieces become unprofitable.

As sprays can, therefore, be made on a lower price schedule, this is the third reason for giving them preference. Put the small spender's order up in a spray instead of an unfinished design.

Then again, the ease and quickness of construction possible in a spray speaks volumes for urging its use. That is why the big stores prefer to make a spray rather than a design for the same price.

The fifth reason is that it takes less help to handle the making of sprays, and consequently it is much more profitable in the long run. The store with $50 worth of work divided up into six or seven wire frame designs, finds the morning crowded with work. Everybody must help to get them out on time, while the same $50 worth of work in sprays can be completed entirely by one man in less than two hours, without hurrying.

A Word About Ribbons

The quantity of ribbon and chiffon used by the retail florists' trade is enormous. Most of it goes into funeral work. A ribbon may mar a spray by being overdone; that is, when it is all bow and no flowers, or when the ribbon is too narrow or the quality too poor, although

for the average spray it is not at all necessary to have a heavy ribbon. What is most desired, is a good general effect and in this color is of first importance. The manufacturers of florists' ribbon have solved this problem for us, so that there is no excuse for discord in the ribbon. A ribbon that is of too high a color for the flowers will have a marked tendency to make them look faded or off color, while the ribbon itself seems not to be the offender. A ribbon a shade lighter in color than the flowers will not noticeably mar the general effect.

CHAPTER IX

The Large Casket Spray . . . The Pall . . . The Casket Cover

Large Casket Spray

AN OVERSIZE spray always lacks in beauty of lines and in the fine detail of the smaller cluster. Trying to make a huge spray, without a change of method from that given in the preceding chapter, is to witness an unsatisfactory floral arrangement, particularly from its mechanical construction.

It is possible, and entirely practical, to create a large spray ensemble that will cover all or part of the top of the casket. For this spray it is necessary to have a foundation other than the flexible greens used in spray making. To this end some designers use a mossed board, a panel about 36 in. long by 6 in. wide, with wet moss tied on in mound foundation. There is one main objection to this mossed board foundation and that is bulkiness. It is difficult, if not well nigh impossible, to make up a mossed panel without the finished piece taking on a clumsy and bulky flower bed appearance.

A foundation, as illustrated in Figure 52, is composed of two wood strips of suitable length with a mossed wreath

Fig. 52—Foundation of Casket Cover Spray

A description of this simple structural beginning and the method of makeup are explained in the text. On the left end is shown the first two clusters lashed to the fern-covered wooden strips. Work from the ends and finish in the center. A wreath of concentrated design can be worked out with space around it for fancy flat greens to accentuate the circle; or fill in solidly with flowers as shown in Fig. 53

FIG. 53—LARGE CASKET COVER SPRAY—COMPLETED

This design may be modified to suit the taste—with long hanging sides and ends; or more on the order of a panel, tapering to rounded points. If made full like the illustration, it becomes a casket cover in its use. Be sure to use enough greens in the underground work to give density and to insure keeping qualities

frame, size 12 in., lashed to the strips in the center. make up loose, fanlike clusters of the flowers to be used and attach these clusters to the wood strips with a wire twist, using medium soft greens, such as fancy ferns and Asparagus sprengeri. Cover the strips, working from both ends toward the center. Then proceed with the arrangement of a climax in the center, with the wreath frame as an aid. This climax may be just a continuation of the top and finished with a ribbon effect, or you may proceed to arrange an elaborate cluster of choice combination flowers, using the mossed frame as a base, the flowers to be inserted on wood picks in various lengths until center is filled. This design offers many opportunities for striking effects, in both form of flowers and colors, and is second only to the casket cover or the pall in price and effectiveness.

How the Casket Cover and Pall Differ

What is the difference between a casket cover and a pall? Generally speaking, there is no difference between them, but there is a difference, and a very marked one, in floral art. A casket cover is a solid panel of flowers made on a wire frame. A pall is blanket-like, made on a flexible mesh or velour foundation. The word blanket is sometimes used in the trade but it is meaningless and incorrect.

In talking about the mechanics of floral art, be careful in your choice of words. Speaking of flowers as "stuff" is exceedingly detrimental.

Wire Frame for Casket Cover

The wire frame for a foundation is perhaps more widely used than the others. It has several practical advantages. One is that it can be made without a lining of silk or other material. The frame itself is made of the same gauge wire that is used in all large designs. The surface has a slight bulge to it but it is not intended at any time to be mossed. These frames come in standard sizes and are adjustable in length. One section of the frame consists of a separate piece that is removable when used on the casket before lid is put on. (See Figure 54.)

The frame is first covered with greens. There is no arbitrary rule as to what kind; therefore, the base can be covered with fancy ferns over which the finer greens may be used. A common error in cover making is that of bushiness. Be careful of that from the beginning. Now proceed with the stemming, for no matter what stock you use, it will require stemming before it is used.

Suppose the whole surface is to be covered with white Roses; use the weakest stemmed stock you can get, cutting the stems 6 in. to 8 in. long. The next step is to gather the Roses into flat clusters. These are wired in position until the entire frame is covered. The whole when finished should present a fairly even surface with no greens in evidence. The side garlands can be put on next. These can be as elaborate as the price permits, but if you wish to be considered artistic by the undertaker, do not cover too much with the side decorations. An edging around the frame to give depth and emphasis is

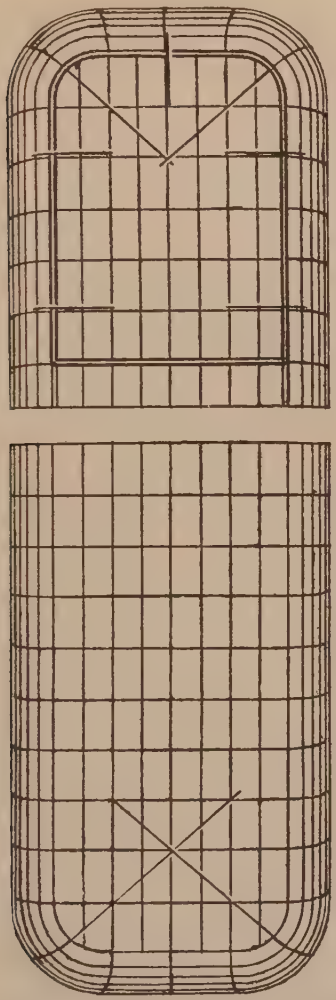


FIG. 54—Wire frame for a casket cover. The exact size is 6 feet 3 inches long

FIG. 55—ELABORATE CASKET COVER MADE ON WIRE FRAME

next in order. A color is good here; if it is lavender Peas, first make them into a rope garland, not too thin, and then fasten it. This border will cover the junction between the top and the side festoons.

Other decorations for the panel, like an orchid cluster or corner pieces, should be made up first and then attached. Efforts to cheapen this beautiful design have resulted in a straggly mass of greens and widely scattered flowers. We think a cover should never be attempted for less than $100. If you cannot make a good cover, don't drag the art down by a poor one; sell them a casket cover spray.

The Pall

(Two different foundations are used)

Depending on the price received for the work and the wishes of the customer, you may use either of two foundations for the pall—the mesh cloth or the casket cover netting, a cotton mesh waxed over to give it body and prevent shrinkage. The latter comes in 33, 36 and 42 in. widths and is obtainable at supply houses. This is a low priced foundation which, with sateen or satin lining, does not figure very much on the cost sheet.

Green burlap is sometimes used as a foundation for sewing on the garlands, but it produces a baggy, coarse finish.

The cotton mesh foundation is used exclusively by many retailers who pride themselves on the quality of their floral arrangements. In putting the pall together,

FIG. 56—FLORAL PALL SHOWING RAISED CENTER—*See text*

the net is first covered with fancy fern leaves, over which the flowers are fastened in clusters, by means of a wire run through the mesh and twisted; or, still better, make long, flat garlands on the worktable and attach these to the foundation by sewing with heavy thread and bag needle or by means of short wires run through and twisted.

The garland method of covering results in less gaping and separating of the flowers when the pall is draped on the casket. In the center of the pall make a foundation for a raised cluster of choice flowers, such as orchids and combination, by using four or five Calla stems about 6 to 8 in. long tied together in cylinder form. Sew these stems (if no Calla stems are available use moss) to the mesh and enter the orchids into its fleshy pulp with wood picks.

The back of the mesh must now be covered to hide the wires and seal up the bottom. Sateen of dark green is usually considered good enough, but sometimes it must be satin. Turn the selvedge of the lining, with generous overlap, around the edges of the net and sew neatly. Safety pins may be used if well concealed.

Using Velour Foundation for the Pall

The best foundation for a floral pall is a good quality velour. The desirable colors would be purple, lavender, black, or perhaps white in rare instances. Velour comes in strips about 20 in. wide. The strips are sewed together and the outside edge hemmed. A pall of proper

size is one which completely covers the top of casket and hangs down an inch or two below. An adult casket, regulation size, would call for a velour foundation about 9½ ft. long by 5½ ft. wide. These dimensions seem large, but they are for the average size metallic lined casket only, of which the outside measurements of the lid are 6 ft. 9 in. by 25½ in. wide.

The decorations of the pall consist entirely of garlands. Wind them good and tight so that there is no danger of pulling apart. When the velour is not intended to be entirely covered with flowers, but shows through between the garlands and clusters, mark out place where the garlands will come with a chalk line and with a large needle knot a row of narrow tapes for tying the garlands on. Let the tapes be about every 6 in. around the top and the festoons on the sides. It is well to have the exact measurements of the lid so that you can space the garlands on the top to come exactly at the edge.

The pall is far more artistic than the casket cover. It is not flowery enough for some trade, but it is, nevertheless, the masterpiece of floral art. More than one has asked: "How do you handle a pall or a cover at the funeral?" It should always be placed in position by the florist. Two men are needed to go along with it. A flexible cover and the pall are usually draped over the end of the casket, or if the lid is hinged, as is often the case, the drape is caught up on it and falls across the foot of the casket to the floor.

CHAPTER X

Table Decorations

The Influence of the Prevailing Mode . . . Catchy Combinations that Conform with the Season . . . Color is King, a Lesson on the Harmonizing of Nature's Tints

While the art of floral arrangement is one of the oldest in the world, it is, commercially speaking, the newest. Flowers were used for personal adornment and as symbols of sentiment in the time of the Pharaohs; yet it remained for this day of luxurious living to discover that the arrangement of flowers in their many forms and colors is an art no less important than that which designs and creates the styles in dress, or the skill of the artist himself, in any field.

The average florist whose work is limited to the making of various stereotyped funeral emblems, knows nothing of the heights above him. He cannot appreciate the work of his advanced contemporary, any more than the uncultured eye can discern the technique of a masterpiece in oil.

Table decorating represents but one item of the florists' business, but in itself it is as distinctive as the architecture of the wedding bunch. While much has been writ-

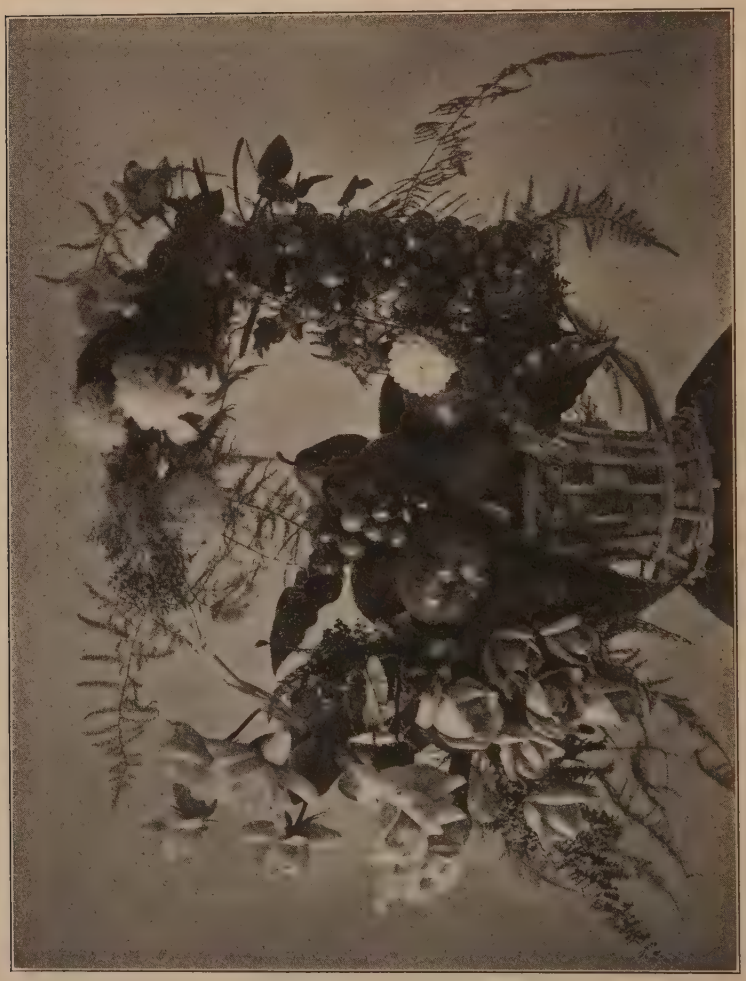


FIG. 57—CENTERPIECE FOR AUTUMN TABLE

ten of this subject, it is in no danger of becoming hackneyed, for there is nothing in floracraft that calls for more originality, more versatility and individuality in its details than the table. Would you like to know just how the style in other things influences color and combinations in flowers? Even if your trade does not call for modishness, why not become an authority yourself, and be favorably known for uptodateness?

The Choice of Materials Favors the Season

The season influences the choice of materials to some extent, from the viewpoint of both customer and decorator. From this standpoint, the year may be said to be divided into two seasons: the Autumn or Winter season, extending from October to the end of January, after which begins the Spring season, with its wealth of dainty colors. The dominant flower of the Fall season is the Chrysanthemum, until it is overtaken by the red and green of Christmas. The largest blooms of these are not as desirable for table work as the medium ones. Dahlias come in before the social season is well started and leave so early that they are hardly worth considering. The fancy varieties, however, with their riot of color, are desirable material for early October, before the frost catches them. Oak foliage, when fresh and clean, is valuable with Autumn flowers. The newer Roses are always effective, providing they are well arranged. Carnations, when used, are always better in a low Sunburst. The vivid shades are fine for a man's affair; nothing better, unless it be red Roses and white Lilac.

FIG. 58—FOR THE BRIDAL PARTY

Roses and Carnations should never be used in the same combination. Roses and Chrysanthemums are even worse. Consider the form of the flower as well as the color in choosing material. There are no hard and fast rules, yet no one would think of combining orchids with Asters, Dahlias or Gladiolus in table work or any arrangement. To make effective combinations, there are two principles to observe; namely, form and color. Combinations which produce harmony in both form and color are ideal.

Flower Forms

(In longitude and latitude)

Have you ever noticed the enhancing effect of tiny buds among open Roses—of the little pointed green tips in their association with partly open and full blown flowers? This is the principle of floral arrangement in regard to form and may be spoken of, in explanatory terms, as longitude and latitude.

Some varieties of bloom give only height. Others may be considered to be amenable to both height and breadth, as comparing the monotony of a bouquet of flat, open Roses to one of buds in various stages of development grouped with open flowers. Of the two, which is the more pleasing?

In arrangement, therefore, depress the wide open or latitude formed flowers low down in the cluster, whether it be basket, flower-bowl or bouquet, and top off with the spikey, plumey flowers that give only altitude to

combinations. Remember we are considering form only, not color, which sometimes overrules form, as we shall see in our next topic, for color is king!

Without variety of form in flowers, the art of arrangement would cease to be employed as the activity of the commercial floral artist. Besides the clear type of form in breadth and height, there are innumerable multiform small flowers which are valuable as combinations but in themselves are weak and insipid. These combinations of miniature flowers are used in groups or handfuls and give lightness and airiness.

In commercial arrangement we have Carnations, Dahlias, Chrysanthemums, Lilies, Asters, Calendulas, and such like, which give substance and weight to arrangement and are classified as flowers of latitude. The longitude assortment would include Delphiniums, Snapdragons, Buddleias, Lilacs, Lily-of-the-valley, and so on. The combinations that lighten, fill in between and give balance are Sweet Peas, Gypsophila, Heather, Candytuft and all miniatures sold at wholesale in bunches.

Color is King

Color in flowers is the first quality of all. Color is the attractive force, for colorless flowers would be as meaningless as straw. All form, outline and proportion are subject to color and its infinite combinations.

In flowers there are really no undesirable colors; even the so called poor colors are not ugly when properly treated in arrangement. In our work one color offsets the other, either by a combination of shades or by rich

contrast. The two general classes of colors are (1) bright colors, and (2) subdued colors; in other words, warm colors that are compelling in their own attractiveness, and cold colors that are heavy and depressing when used alone.

The secret in using and combining colors in floral art is in grouping. The application of the principle of grouping flowers according to their complements in color enables the florist to wear "Joseph's coat of many colors" with comeliness. In our opening chapter we found that a floral artist was one so versatile as to make each

FIG. 59—THE ONE FLOWER SCHEME

FIG. 60—TABLE DECORATION OF ROSES, BOUVARDIAS, MICHAELMAS DAISIES AND ADIANTUM
By Holm & Olson, St. Paul, Minn.

arrangement different. This difference is the glorious accent of another color combination. Every color, every tint and shade can help us to bring out something different throughout the year.

In the science of colors there are three basic colors; namely, red, yellow and blue. From combinations of these, in proportion, we get all the myriad hues and tints which harmonize as shades of the same color or which complement each other in contrast. White, being no color, gives us separation of our groups and of individual flowers and provides accent. Flower colors, with a few exceptions, as some yellows and blues, come to us already blended. We call them red, lavender and pink, which are really not colors but shades, and we are grateful that they are shades of color in blended tones, like the tone shades in music. Because of this, the color science in floral arrangement is different from house painting and is therefore veiled in deep mystery through which the joy of discovery brings an increased understanding to the one who uses his mental eye in watching and comparing. I know a retail florist who maintains a greenhouse of Asparagus plumosus grown under certain cultural conditions to produce yellow-green (warm color) sprays for use in floral work and brightening cut flower boxes.

Many Catchy Combinations Come from Observation

How am I to tell what colors combine? Some of them are easy to discover, while others only reveal

themselves through some outside suggestion, usually from the customer. Who brought out the cluster combination of Baby Primroses, yellow Daisies and pink Spencer Peas, dotted here and there with single stems of indoor Cornflowers. Perhaps you saw these colors of lavender, yellow, pink and blue in blossoms of silk, in a wreath around the crown of black straw in a milliner's window. So, when a lady patron described just what she wanted for a centerpiece, you fell in line, just as though you had made a hundred of them. Style creates new combinations in flowers every season. The line between good and bad combinations is not wide, so you must watch closely. Be on the lookout, wherever you go, for new ideas and then practice; practice at every opportunity, without fear of being misunderstood.

The Shades in the Colors Must be Right

There is just one shade of pink and blue that will go together to make that "Frenchy" combination of pink and blue. Yellow Daisies and lavender Sweet Peas are pleasing. The yellow markings in the throat of the Cattleya forecast a combination with Sunburst or Ward Roses. The green orchid, Cypripedium, is entirely neutral and is effective with anything that offers contrast, especially the warm tones of pink and red. The same applies to Mignonette. Remember pink Roses and orchids (lavender shades) never harmonize. Indeed, orchids are discordant with all colored flowers, except those that offer a color in contrast, as yellow, green, white, or very pale tints that shade to lavender or yellow.

Fig. 61—Table Decoration of Pink and White Sweet Peas and Adiantum Ferns

These flowers and ferns are arranged in a tall vase and, in the shallow bowl in which it stands, form the centerpiece. The same material is used in the tracings which extends from the bowl to the low vases, also as well as in those vases in the corsages and boutonnieres, on the napkins on each plate. In this simple, but beautiful decoration the guests have an unobstructed view across the table, always a desirable feature in table decorations

In the decorator's art, as in everything else, it is the first impression that counts. The whole effect must create the right impression, when the guests take their seats at the table. If it is weak and insipid, the chances are that it will remain so to the end. The plot in the arrangement must be clear and easily read at a glance.

A Characteristic Table Decoration

A beautiful Autumn setting may be arranged by using large bunches of Tokay and white Grapes, in conjunction with Oncidium sprays. Arrange the bunches of Grapes, both kinds, on two wicker plateaus or wicker trays, like a fruit vendor's tray, with a few choice Oak leaves as a garnish. Place them in the center of the table, with a tall, slender vase between them. Raise the fruit basket about 5 in. or 6 in. on blocks and give them a tilted position. Under them, and around on the cloth, fill in with Hydrangea heads, broken in pieces to give an effect of billows of foam. Among the Hydrangeas put a few clusters of yellow Pompons, arranged so the flowers just show through. Be careful not to overdo this part of it. In the center vase put the Oncidium sprays with a mist of Adiantum cuneatum, so that the effect resembles a cloud of yellow butterflies. If the table is of good size, the whole setting, including the fruit trays must be generously done, otherwise do not attempt it.

Mixed clusters in harmonious contrast are effective. They are made in flower dishes or low water baskets, in which are heaped clusters of choice stock of various

colors, as yellow Roses, Sweet Peas, Snapdragon, etc., the whole illumined with three big, glistening Gardenias. It takes an artist of ability to arrange one of these. They must be low, so as not to obstruct the view, without being flat. The flowers must be the right length of stem, so that the effect is not scattered. No green is in evidence. The arrangment is close, but not uniformly so.

Putting on the Stamp of Authority

"Sterling" stands for all that is good in silver. The men in the retail florist business who have amounted to anything have done so because they put the stamp of authority back of their methods and goods. They not only believed in themselves and their products, but they carried conviction that was convincing. The atmosphere of the store was one of authority. It went out with the goods, and Mrs. Discriminating Buyer found them just as she had pictured. When the decorators had finished she went into the dining-room expecting to be pleased, and—was pleased. The decorations were correct in style and appointment, because the man who was behind them was an authority in his line. Everything in the high class store hinges on this, for others, too, have good ideas, perfect taste, and stylish goods, but they fail utterly to make the impression, because they sell with an apology. We do not look for faults in "Sterling" silver, or criticisms on a name that has long spelled authority.

Style in decorating is distinctly feminine, and the hostess usually divides the credit for a "perfectly ador-

able" table with the florist. The successful decorator must be a man of temperament and initiative. He must dare to take a chance. Believe yourself to be a great authority in your art. Reputations are not made on combinations of pink and white flowers. You must push out into the unknown and be a discoverer.

Study the room; note the woodwork and wall coverings. Inquire about the decorations on the china. Don't take anything for granted. Go down to the last detail. Suppose, by some oversight, pink shades were put on the candelabra, when the decorations were red? By attending to all these details, when the order is taken, you unconsciously stamp yourself the authority.

(*Further reference to table decorations is made in Chapter XIV, where table work is featured as part of Hotel and Home decorations.*)

CHAPTER XI

Wedding Bouquets and Boutonnieres

Characteristics of a Good Wedding Bouquet . . . The Forearm Shower . . . The Formal Boutonniere . . . Preserving Freshness in Flowers

The masterpiece of bouquets is the wedding bunch. It requires more thought, more practice, more skill and resourcefulness to build a good wedding bouquet than it does to make any other floral arrangement.

There is a personality in bridal flowers, just as in the design of a gown or the style of a hat. Flowers for personal adornment require different treatment from those which decorate the dinner table or screen the music in the ballroom. While we have advanced the floral art to notable heights, there is still much to be done. Styles change, and we must change with them. A new style is only a new twist to an old standard pattern. Many wedding bouquets are merely clusters of second grade stock, ill-chosen, badly arranged and lacking in grace and proportion. They are finished only by a maze of ribbon showers, long identified with bridal effects.

A customer at the jewelry counter was shown two necklaces, one at $15, another at $10. "What is the dif-

FIG. 62—BRIDE'S COLONIAL BOUQUET WITH ROUND LACE HOLDER

ference between them?" he asked; "Five dollars," said the salesgirl. The difference, in many instances, between an arm bouquet and one to lay across the feet, is the No. 2 shower of ribbons of the former. Many a bride carries a floral tennis racket to the altar for a wedding bouquet.

In studying the subject from the customer's viewpoint, we find that sentiment alone does not enter into the choosing of wedding flowers. The thing desired most is correctness. In comparing a number of wedding bunches of the best designers, it was found that they were all incorrect on one important point—they were not easy to carry. They were unbalanced and top heavy. These bunches were all very beautiful when displayed in the store; but the bride who carried them found them cumbersome, bulky and heavy. A fitting punishment for the artists would be to make them carry their own creations up the aisle and back again, to the slow, measured step of Mendelssohn or Wagner.

The Method Discovered

The method of making a good wedding bunch is founded on two points: observation and practice. You may work in a busy store for twenty years, but unless you are studiously observant and have an earnest desire to improve, you will learn absolutely nothing.

It is comparatively easy to get practice in design work, but there are no stores that make wedding effects every day. This art seems to unfold itself more rapidly

FIG. 63—FORMAL BRIDAL BOUQUET OF CALLAS

Use paraffin wax to seal stems of Callas as they will stain the gown

to some people than to others. The best designers I know are those who have thought out the little kinks in making up, have invited criticism, and have practised with some old flowers when the opportunity offered itself. The forearm shower, which is the most effective and the best bride's bouquet of the day, was perfected by a storeman, who went to the church to give the bouquets to the bridal party. He remained to see the ceremony and noted that the bride held her bouquet with the weight resting on the left arm; wherefore he reasoned: "If the hand bouquet is so heavy that it must be rested on the arm, why not make one to rest on the wrist and hang over the forearm in perfect balance?" This is the perfected forearm shower, which embodies the principles of all correct bouquets; namely, ease of carriage, grace, good lines and proportion. Its construction will be treated upon in the paragraphs following.

The Forearm Shower

Nearly all retailers make this bouquet with original variations. The materials available and in general use are too well known for comment. Just a few points now present themselves. When Roses are used you will find that it is the weaker-stemmed kinds that make up best. Use a good medium grade of stock-stem on a No. 21 wire. If the stems are uniformly short, it is always best to put them together in couplets, one Rose below the other, before beginning the bunch. This is one of the mechanical points that make a bouquet come out right, without stubbiness. In stemming Sweet Peas catch a spray

FIG. 64—PRACTICE STUDY NO. 1 ON METHOD OF BUILDING THE WEDDING BOUQUET

The designer is shown placing a detail cluster of Lily-of-the-valley and Sweetheart Roses in the main body of the bouquet. Instead of tying each flower in the bouquet, the artist groups the flowers in units and then binds the sections together

FIG. 65—PRACTICE STUDY NO. 2 ON METHOD OF BUILDING THE WEDDING BOUQUET

The designer is tieing the third unit of the forearm shower, namely, the inverted garland—the balancer. (See text.) The next step, the shower ribbons, is optional with the customer and according to the discretion of the bouquet maker. Bridesmaid's bouquets are made up by the same method

of plumosus at the ends of the stem where the wire is turned. This will lengthen it and furnish the greens for underground. Do not allow the plumosus to come up among the flowers. Just twist it among the stems to block them apart. With Lily-of-the-valley, remove the leaf stem and then put back about half of it, rolling it around the base of the flower stem, as a support and protection under the wire. (See Chapter III for method of stemming.)

There is no better way to build an arm bunch than to put it together over the arm, standing in front of a tall mirror. By looking in the glass you are enabled to see just how your bouquet looks from the front. Begin now to pick up the material with the right hand and place it in position over the back of the hand. For tying use florists green thread and draw tightly. As you approach the wide part, heap up the center and throw the edges out boldly with long lines on the arm and high up against the body. Fill in with enough heavy greens at the core to block the stems apart. From the front the bouquet should now look like a great, generous bunch of flowers caught and held between the arm and the body. To finish it, make a small pointed garland and tie this in an inverted position over the stem ends. You now have a double-end cluster with large top resting on the forearm and the small garland end falling under the hand. Note that the weight is so distributed that it hangs in perfect balance over the arm, like a toy bird that perches upon a string, balanced by the tail.

FIG. 66—ARM BOUQUET OF CHRYSANTHEMUMS AND PIN OAK
A bouquet such as this can be used for the whole wedding party —the bride's in white and the others in colors. Note the inverted flowers appearing below the ribbon bow. This is the inverted garland which serves as a balancer to the bouquet.
(See page 115, "The Forearm Shower")

Fasten the showers to the tail piece, and a few from the top. Make up a bow of wide ribbon by looping it (See Chapter III) with the fingers, and then wire the loops. Run the wire through the bunch, just above the point where the lower spray is fastened, and draw the loops down among the flowers, to give the bunch the appearance of being held together by the ribbon bow. Wrap the core of the bunch with ribbon, to give a nice finish when it touches the hand and wrist, for the bouquet when carried, actually rests on the wrist. Now take the completed bunch and bend and pull it out to give the right effect. The mirror will show you just how it will look when carried. The main point in putting an arm bunch together is to make it broad, avoiding a long, stringy effect. An arm bunch is a concise, concentrated bouquet and must not be confused with the long garlands and sheaf bouquets sometimes carried by bridesmaids. Someone has asked which arm the bouquet is carried on. A bouquet that is built as described can be carried on either arm; on the left before the ceremony, on the right after the ceremony.

Making the Formal Boutonniere

The point in boutonniere making is neatness. The principal flowers in use are white Carnations, white Roses, Gardenias, Lily-of-the-valley, Sweet Peas, etc. For wiring, never use a heavy wire (about No. 23 or No. 24 will do the work), but do not wrap the stems with more turns than are necessary to secure it. In covering the stem use green foil. Cut it into small squares and turn the

FIG. 67—BOUTONNIERES

1, Lily-of-the-valley for bridegroom only. 2, Lily-of-the-valley and white Dendrobium for bridegroom. 3, Gardenia for best man and usher; add a few sprays of Valley for the groom. 4, White Dendrobium for bridegroom or best man. 5, White Rosebud for bridegroom when bride carries Roses. 6, Sweet Pea for best man and ushers. 7, White Carnations for ushers. At banquets boutonnieres of Carnations or Rosebuds, usually pink or red in color, and sometimes Gardenias, are worn

FIG. 68—An arm bunch of Roses. Loose formation of the arm bunch for bridesmaid, showing inverted section, which gives grace and balance to the bouquet. In the bride's shower with the Valley cluster, the formation is closer and more concentrated

edges down as a hem on all four sides. To foil the stem properly so that it will run to a neat point, start one corner of the foil at the base of the flower and twist it around the stem and you will find the foil will roll into a point at the end. By starting the foil diagonally, the stem

FIG. 69—COLONIAL BOUQUET

(See Chapter III for method of stemming)

Main points: Roses cut short, 2 or 3 inches. The double wires when bound together and trimmed form the handle or stem of the bouquet which is wrapped with ribbon. Use lace holders, never paper, except for low priced informal work. The face of the bouquet should not be high in center—a common error—although it should not be entirely flat. Curved line, like a lens, is the correct contour

will wrap more neatly than if turned on the flat side of the foil, when it will result in a square end, which is not only clumsy in appearance, but difficult to enter in the buttonhole.

In making the Gardenia boutonniere, remove all the foliage and place a couple of small leaves under the back of the petals. Push the leaves up until they fit snugly; then run a wire through the leaves and flower as in bridling a Rose. The Gardenia should now present a flat rosette appearance which will fit close to the lapel.

Lily-of-the-valley, Sweet Peas and all flowers of this character must be bunched or formed carefully in round knot formation before turning the wire. Always use a thin wire in tying; string is not satisfactory. Try the boutonniere on your coat and see how it looks. If the Valley spikes are too long, strip off some of the bells from the bottom; otherwise the boutonniere will be too loose and wilt quickly. Keep the flowers close together and build them solidly. Omit all greens unless it be a tiny point of the Valley leaf. This leaf point will aid in supporting the flowers. In choice of boutonnieres for the wedding, the groom usually wears one of the same flower as those of the bride's bouquet. Don't slight the boutonniere and don't forget to put a pin in the stem of every one.

The Sale and the Customer

It takes some experience and ability to handle a wedding order. It is a good plan to have the one who is going to fill it meet the customer. It will promote

FIG. 70—ARM BOUQUET OF DAISIES
Bridesmaid or debutante flowers are first stemmed in thin clusters. For Sweet Peas and similar flowers use same method
Arrangement by William Cleaver Harry

mutual interest and insure the placing of details that are difficult to write out on an order blank. A tiny sample of dress goods giving the colors of the gowns to be worn by the bridesmaids, maid and matron of honor and the flower girl, should always be obtained in order to make an intelligent selection of the best color combination of flowers and ribbons. The salesman who works from the dress samples will book the order—and in less time and with greater satisfaction to all. People who are educated to good work will choose a florist with a reputation and a name which stands for authority. These things—reputation and prestige—do not come without hard work, rightly directed. "Here comes the bride!" Insist on the tall bride carrying a big, generous bouquet. Everyone knows that the tall girl looks stunning behind a big bouquet. Yet for reasons of economy, or a becoming modesty, she wants you to make her a bouquet about the size of an overgrown corsage. The stout bride, and the tiny bride—bless their dear little hearts!—they know that you know just what they should have. Be sure that you do not disappoint them.

The Importance of Delivery

The bride is afraid the wedding flowers will not arrive in time. Did you ever take an order that you were not told five or six times to be sure to have them there early? The advice is timely. Do not wait till the last half hour to deliver. Do not have them there in time; have them there *before* time. Brunettes are more nervous than

blondes. There is no compromise with a brunette. You must be there "with the goods." A blonde is inclined to be more charitable, while a red-haired girl will delay the ceremony and hold the preacher back while you are changing a tire and think nothing of it.

The most tragic instance that ever came to our notice was a delivery to a wedding a short distance from town. The bouquets were timed to reach the house at the eleventh hour. The boy fell asleep on the train and was carried several stops beyond the station. The ceremony proceeded without even a boutonniere. What a fine advertisement for the retailer! When you take the order, find out the hour of the ceremony. Send the bouquets boxed with instructions not to remove until ready to use. On a church delivery it is always the safest plan to send a man from the store to wait until the bridal party arrives.

Preservation of Freshness in Flowers

Fresh picked oranges, if shipped immediately, before being cured or matured, will not have good keeping qualities. All natural products must be "aged" before using in order to preserve their native qualities.

In cut flowers this process is exceedingly important and begins with the care that the grower bestows in placing his cut in receptacles holding sufficient water supply, together with proper atmospheric conditions, until packed for market next morning.

Flowers are nearly 100 per cent water and therefore require a continuous supply. Cutting the stems while

FIG. 71—GATHERING BASKET WITH COLORFUL COMBINATION FOR BRIDESMAIDS, MAID OR MATRON OF HONOR
Carried in nestled position, right or left forearm

under water is highly recommended, especially with such blooms as have tendencies toward softening and wilting when exposed to air, light and handling. A flower stem is composed of long or short pipe-like cells, each with a function of holding and circulating water enough to sustain the flower in its development from bud to seed. When the stem is cut the air rushes in these tiny cell openings and immediately causes them to begin shrinking and contracting and to partly close. Dried and shrunken stems can often be revived by first placing them in hot water, the action of warmth expanding the closed tunnels and restoring water circulation. Many varieties of flowers will become callous upon being subject to long standing in cold water in the refrigerator. Callas, Easter Lilies, Roses, Chrysanthemums and Dahlias are all affected in this way. Cutting a small piece from the end of the stem and providing a change of water is a necessary part of the storeman's work in the preservation of stock.

See that your customers get these instructions on a printed card placed in every box of flowers from your store.

Complaints About Flowers Not Keeping

What does it profit the florist if the customer is disappointed because the flowers did not last well? Such comments as "The Roses hung their heads; the Carnations closed, and the Sweet Peas and Snapdragons just simply dried up," are not probable to one who adds the

FIG. 72—For tiny flower girls use flat baskets with childish flowers. Loose blooms may be used for strewing down the aisle. Carried by the handle

study of this lecture to his present knowledge and, withal, a broad dash of common sense. If there is any single experience in professional floristry that should be guarded against it is complaints from this cause. Enough to say that if such do occur, they should be taken up at once and a satisfactory adjustment made without delay. Never ignore a complaint of any kind, for in the adjustment you will find an opportunity of making a favorable impression, which is advertising of the highest order.

The Scientific Method of Preserving Freshness

Many successful establishments make up wedding bouquets the day before the wedding day, whenever possible to do so, in order to insure perfect keeping qualities.

After the bouquet is finished (except the ribbons) it is sprayed lightly with a rubber sprayer and then wrapped loosely with parchment paper or manila tissue, also well moistened with the sprayer. If manila tissue is used, make it double in thickness and again spray the outside of the bundle. The next step is to cover the whole with wax paper; then put away in a box lined with the same paper and place in the cool refrigerator until ready to use. On opening the box the next day the flowers in the bouquet will be found crisp and perfectly fresh, with all the latent heat chilled out.

The bouquets are then ribboned and packed, this time in dry wax paper, and delivered.

This is the scientific method of ripening or hardening made work after it leaves the warm hands of the arranger. In the "ageing" of flowers by this simple process the

"fagged out" look in bouquets and all design work is never recorded.

Funeral sprays should always be made ahead of time and allowed to chill off before shipping or sent locally. Baskets of flowers are perfect when they reach their destination if wrapped in the same manner with moist tissue and an outside layer of wax paper, thus preventing wilting, bruising and displacement of the contents.

In closing, may I say that I have seen sprays kept for days, wrapped in wet newspaper and carefully insulated from outside air. The boxes, of course, were opened at 10 to 12 hour intervals and the moisture renewed. Remember to keep them in a cool, even temperature, excluded from the air; otherwise the opposite will result—spoiling and fermentation.

CHAPTER XII

Corsage Bouquets

A Review of Best, Easiest and Quickest Methods Used by the Store Artist, Showing the Importance of Every Detail . . . The Gown Corsage or Shoulder Bouquet

No one can succeed in the retail business until he knows the value of time. Speed with accuracy makes the modern floral artist. There are not many who measure on all sides to this standard. To take too much time for a piece of floral work, or to be extra fussy, often results in spoiling it. To be able to make any kind of "make up" piece, to avoid unnecessary motions and non-essentials, yet turn out beautiful work that has more detail than the average, is the mark of genius.

It is in the making of a corsage bouquet that details count most. Remember this: it is to be worn by someone and that one is a woman. If there is anything that the feminine heart adores it is detail. It is the little embellishments that count most with the fair recipient. Omit them and your work is ordinary, no matter how conscientious you are in the choice of good material.

To the man who never stops to think, an explanation of the best way to do anything seems like a long

FIG. 73—CORSAGE WITH SHIELD

way around. Attention to detail in preparation saves time and keeps away dissatisfaction. The retailer who has his stock carefully cleaned and graded before putting it away, is following the best, easiest and quickest ways. When a corsage of Ward Roses is wanted in a hurry, and the stock is found stemmed and thornless, to put it together is a matter of a few minutes.

The corsage bouquet is a personal affair. Its purchaser has more than a speaking acquaintance with one

who will wear it. If the flowers are ill chosen and badly arranged, it is a reflection on the sender and the florist. On the other hand, if it is correct and beautifully executed, it may some day bring a wedding order.

Everything is Imporant

The man with a reputation for doing things well is always the one who has the habit of trying to improve on his best. The correct corsage bouquet has three marked qualities that distinguish it: (1) Conformity, ease of

Fig. 74—Corsage bouquet of Cattleyas, Lily-of-the-valley, with ribbon and Farleyense Fern

wearing; (2) pleasing color combination and ribbon effect; (3) reasonable keeping qualities. Many follow these principles quite unconsciously, without ever stopping to think or analyze their work. It is for them, as well as the aspirant from the small establishment, that we enlarge on this subject.

The source of power enabling one to arrange flowers artistically is found not only in experience, but in the use and development of the faculty of imagination. Without the ability mentally to picture, ideally, the work you wish to do, it will never be anything beyond the dead level of mediocrity. The hand will unconsciously follow the eye that sees the thing in a vision of perfection. To make a good corsage bouquet you must mentally picture it being worn; see how well it conforms to the wearer. Eyes front as you go down the avenue, pick out the real corsage bouquets from those which are mere bunches of flowers.

The corsage bouquets of one variety of stock in standard use are many, from violets, that need no arrangement, to Pansies, Sweet Peas, Japanese Irises, Daisies, Gardenias and miniature Roses. We speak of Violets when used by themselves as a bunch of Violets; when made up in a combination as a corsage of Violets and Valley. Combination effects in corsages are striking, stylish and command better prices. Some of the best of these that are offered are pink Sweet Peas and blue Irises; yellow Daisies clustered in the center of lavender Sweet Peas; Cecile Brunner Roses nestling among Ward Roses, while Lily-of-the-valley may be called a combi-

nation flower, enriching and heightening the effect wherever it is used.

The Arrangement Must be Concise

The mechanical part of corsage making is simple enough, yet of great importance. Avoid straggly bunches. Dainty little tips should stick out here and there, but the bouquet itself must be concise and concentrated. Many an otherwise good arrangement is spoiled by failing to observe this principle or by making the bunch too wide and out of proportion. Stem only such flowers as need the support to insure the keeping qualities. It is always necessary to stem Ward Roses, orchids and sometimes Lily-of-the-valley. Sweet Peas never need stemming unless the stock is very short and poor. The following is the best and quickest method of handling Sweet Peas.

Take two or three sprays of green (miniature corsage ferns) in the left hand, and build the Sweet Peas on this background of green by picking them up with the right hand, holding the stems between the thumb and fingers of the left hand. Outline the edge first and then fill in, working toward the center. Place some flowers flat against the background and in finishing the center, run some small sprays over them to raise the face of the bouquet in an uneven surface. You now have a completed corsage, but as yet the stems are not tied together. Bind them with florists green thread twice around, and then trim the uneven stems to a point by clipping them back with the shears. Now tie on the shield and cover the stem with foil or ribbon. The best way to handle

foil is to have it cut in squares about 3½ in. by 3½ in. Place the corner of one of these squares up the back of the stem and then turn it around the stem with the thumb and fingers. By starting it point first, it will twist to a point at the stem end. The main thing to avoid is a clubby, square ended stem. The whole operation, up to this point and including the ribbon effect following, should take about three or four minutes.

There are two ways of putting on the ribbon tie. One is to have the bows on hand, made up and fastened with wire. Insert the wire through the base of the bouquet near the stem and then draw it with the loops in among the flowers to give them the appearance of being held together by the ribbon. Another method is to tie the ribbon around the stem, making a double bow to give four loops. In both cases it is best to omit the stereotyped fish-tail cut in the end of the ribbon. Do not forget to stick the pins in the stem before putting the bouquet in the box. Remember the importance of details.

The Gown Corsage or Shoulder Bouquet

The shoulder or gown corsage is a distinct style. It differs in construction from other corsages in that it is stemless and requires the special shield to complete the make-up and supply the means of fastening to the gown. This corsage is a formal one and used on such occasions. The two safety clasps which form part of the shield enable the wearer to attach it to the left shoulder or any part of the gown without injury to the fabric.

Fig. 75—The Gown Corsage or Shoulder Bouquet

The flower cluster is made very concise; it is double in formation and possesses bulk or heaviness. In making this bouquet, stem all flowers used on very light wire. Almost no greens are needed, although this is left to the discretion of the designer. After the tie is made, attach the bouquet to the shield by means of the narrow ribbons that come on body of the shield for that purpose. The next and final step is the ribbon bow, which conformity suggests should be short and tuffed. Make it up and attach with the wire and draw down tight among the flowers.

The shoulder bouquet should never be made loose or straggly. The same bouquet can also be worn on the wrist, attached by ribbon straps. To insure the keeping qualities of the flowers, make up the cluster a few hours ahead of delivery time, wrap with moist paper and chill in the refrigerator. When ready to be sent out, put on the shield and ribbon. This extra care will reward you in repeat orders from satisfied customers.

Listen to These Selling Points

The greatest selling point to feature in taking the order is that of color. In making suggestions it always stamps your work with authority to ask tactfully what color of gown she is going to wear. Of course, he doesn't know, but the next time he comes in it will be, "I want to get something to wear with a blue dress," Men appreciate your efforts to keep them from "getting in bad," and will send you a lot of new trade out of pure gratitude. You know that a red-haired girl cannot wear pink, and yellow flowers make a blonde's tresses look like straw. You will note that it is better in the choice of wearing flowers to use those colors that strike a harmonious contrast rather than the old methods of matching. Have a few samples made up in the case. (Refer to "Color is King" in Chapter X.)

Another thing to remember is in the use of bulky materials like Peas. Avoid putting too much in the corsage for the money; otherwise she may complain that it is too large and the next time he will buy a smaller one by paying a dollar less.

CHAPTER XIII

Wedding Decorations in the Church and Home

Materials in General Use and How to Use Them . . . Decorative Properties . . . The Prie-dieu . . . The Gates and Canopy . . . Objective Points to Cover in Both Church and Home

When we mention wedding decorations, the first thing that comes to mind is the Kentia palm. Generally speaking, the Kentia and the Cibotium fern form the basis of nearly all wedding decorations, both large and small, at home or in the church.

There is a certain class of private home decorative work where only a few specimen plants are used, and sometimes none at all, in conjunction with cut flowers. Here the decorator makes use of many properties in basketry, pedestals and vases. Some of these he supplies; other receptacles are the art pieces already in the rooms. This style of decorating is an a la carte order, and is always the most expensive way for the hostess, but invariably it is the easiest and most profitable way to handle it from the florist's standpoint. In such an order the instructions may call for a vase of two dozen American Beauty Roses in the drawing room, filling the two

FIG. 76—CHURCH DECORATION FOR A SPRING WEDDING

The large elevated baskets of Lilacs, with narrow ribbon showers, are quite effective, as are the well made clusters of Peonies and Lilacs for ends of pews along the main aisle

By Dunlop's, Ltd., Toronto, Ont., Canada

large urns in the library with yellow Chrysanthemums, and arranging the large silver service on the dining-room table with orchids, etc. You can readily see that the man who attends to the arrangement must be more than a first year novice. Indeed, a good man with one assistant can execute a very large order on the a la carte plan with very little preparation. The florist in estimating the cost simply makes a store charge for everything used and adds an extra charge of 20 per cent for service and arrangement.

Too many plants are not always desired in the house affair, both on account of space and of the plants cutting out and hiding objects of art in various parts of the house and hall where there is no need for screening. In church weddings a certain number of foliage plants are absolutely necessary. Elaborate church weddings are exceptional with even the big city florist, no matter how much he tries to impress you to the contrary. But nearly all church weddings call for some decoration, although it may be but a simple bank up front, with two clusters of flowers on the pews in the aisle to mark the reserved section. In the use of flowers in the church, it depends largely on the price and somewhat on the denomination of the church. If it is Episcopal the vases on the communion table in the chancel must always be filled with cut flowers, even though your order was taken for a plant decoration only. Avoid trouble for yourself by noting this fact beforehand. Errors that somtimes creep into decorative work must be corrected as soon as detected. Any delay may be too late for an adjustment.

FIG. 77—CHURCH WEDDING DECORATION

Showing palms in center of organ loft, at right and left of organ and at each side of the chancel. Facade of organ loft is covered with greens, and ropings of greens interspersed with flowers are festooned from loft railing. Standards surmounted by vases filled with Chrysanthemums are in front of the chancel and in the aisles

The Decorator's Properties

The supply houses furnish certain stock fixtures. Have a separate room or large closet wherein is kept everything pertaining to decorating. Let this be the property room. In pedestals, the wooden tripod stand in two or three sizes is the most useful and inexpensive. A few iron stands are valuable, but in patent combination stands there is nothing to be recommended.

A few wicker screens of very plain design are useful in screening the music and cutting off a portion of the room. In covering the screens use Southern Smilax or any foliage obtainable. Screens also make excellent backgrounds for any plants or flowers that are used in front of them.

An important feature is the prie-dieu or kneeling stool. This generally used and called for in formal weddings at home. Sometimes at the church the florist is asked to supply a kneeling stool. Other properties are the wedding gates and arches, etc. These outfits are sometimes useful and effective in putting up an outdoor wedding and in church work, but they are of little use in the home setups, although sections may sometimes be employed to help out. It is not desirable to have too many stock fixtures on hand. They are all right when used the first few times, but after that they are in danger of becoming hackneyed. I once heard a lady remark that she knew Mr. G—— was the decorator because she recognized that same bamboo trellis he had used at her daughter's wedding. It is better by far to have a few simple fixtures from the supply house and use them in conjunction with

hand-made ones that can be refixed and changed, so that your materials may not be easily recognized.

Aisle posts can be made by using iron plant stands with a basket or round plateau lashed to the top. When these are properly filled and the ribbon or silk cord fastened from one to the other, the effect is better than the white enameled posts made especially for the aisle for home weddings. Speaking of home-made fixtures, we recall that one of the nicest church aisle effects we ever saw was produced with white curtain poles. A small round basket was nailed to the top of each pole, the latter lashed to the pews on either side of the aisle with wire which was covered over with green. The baskets were criss-crossed with wire and filled in with Asparagus sprengeri and Laurel stubble. Into this were entered the stems of white Chrysanthemums in long-stemmed effect. The poles were put up in position first and the flowers placed in the baskets from a stepladder. The baskets, being metal lined, held enough water to keep the flowers fresh.

The Canopy and Mantle in Home Weddings

In the home weddings the canopy is sometimes used. It consists of a wire frame from the wire supply of the wholesale house. The finishing or decorating of it is a simple operation. It is covered, first, with soft greens and the flowers are wound in garlands and draped over it. To make it more effective and misty, white tulle is drawn over and among the flowers and greens; the effect is truly wonderful.

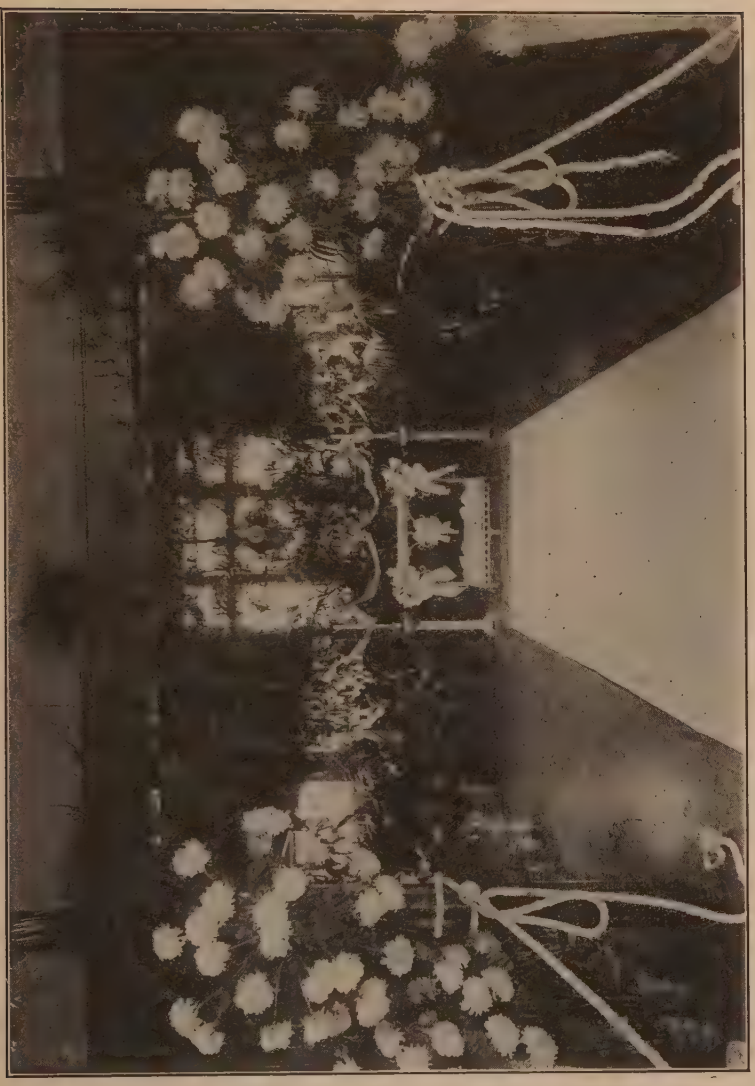


Fig. 78—Home Wedding Decoration—Chrysanthemums, Palms and Asparagus

In the majority of home weddings the locality directly in front of the mantle is selected as the place for the ceremony. The old-fashioned way of decorating the mantle was to bank the top by covering it with a board mossed like a plateau and filled with flowers as a funeral design. Sometimes a glass vase was imbedded in the moss at either end for long-stemmed flowers. The present day treatment of the mantle is not so set in its make-up. The mantle board has long since passed out of use. In its place a low gathering basket is used in the center of the mantle top, in long flowing effect, and tilted in the most approved artistic manner. On the ends of the mantle tall baskets or vases are used to give height to the arrangements. Screen the mantle top with a little choice green, but only just enough to relieve it. On either side group the palms in loose, open formation, bringing them forward to set the mantle in a recess.

In the work of home decorating it is often necessary to drive a tack on the top of the door frame, or the edge of a moulding, to fasten a guide wire for a garland. The warning is tactful when we say, "Don't let anyone from the household see you do it." Most people are sensitive about this, as well as the matter of moving furniture and making dirt for some one else to clean up. In all of these things be careful. If you wish to put the stamp of highest approval upon yourself and your work, see that nothing is left but perfection when you leave the finished job. Carry a kit with you, stocked with pins, wire, double pointed tacks, hammer, a spool of wire, etc. We recall decorating the home of a governor of the state for the

FIG. 79—ELABORATE HOME DECORATION FOR AN AUTUMN WEDDING WITH SHOWERED CANOPY

wedding of his daughter. Lucky for us, we got a tip from a member of the household that the governor was very touchy about having any bric-a-brac moved from its place. The house, by the way, was crammed with trophies of every kind and description. When all was finished and he came in to inspect the work and saw all his beloved treasures undisturbed, with the floral decorations peeping out from between them, he proclaimed us the best and only real decorators that ever came to the mansion.

The Use of Greens and Arrangement

In the arrangement of plants there is no set rule. The skilled decorator in clustering his plants avoids the tight bank of earlier years. It is far better to arrange your palms loosely and then fill in around the pots and open places about the pedestals with sprays of Oak or any other kind of foliage. We must, however, give preference to Southern or Wild Smilax when it is obtainable, on account of its lasting qualities. Avoid straight lines in your arrangement. Let it be one plant up and one down, one front and one back; break joints so that the general effect is like the cluster of a well arranged shrubbery on the landscape. If blooming plants are used, always place or group them in objective points; in other words, place them where they will show off best.

One of the big points in church decorating is to cut the floor space; that is, bring the plants close to the line where the ceremony will take place. Reduce the size of the chancel in both width and depth. Cut the space

with palms, and get the credit for having filled it, when all back of the palm line is empty. It's the distant effect that is important. If the church is one without a chancel, and where the ceremony will take place at the head of the aisle in front of the platform, we would suggest cutting across the front at this point, screening completely the platform, choir seats and all. In church decorating, if you wish the decoration to excite comment, make it seem that there is nothing in the church but the bride and the decorations. Regarding the remainder of the auditorium, nothing is needed unless, of course, the people wish to spend the money. Nothing shows up the church decoration like the white runner on the center aisle. This is not considered as part of the florist's decoration, but if it is a big affair, and the awning and canopy man has received no order to cover the floor of the aisle in white, give him the order yourself; it is worth the cost to the decoration.

The Sale and the Working Plan

Don't wait until the day before the wedding to plan and prepare for the decoration. Just as soon as the order is given, which may be a month ahead, make out a specification sheet. On this sheet enter all memorandums of every item and detail of the work. No detail is too trivial, and a rough penciled sketch of something that words do not convey is a big help. Lay out just what properties you intend using and the approximate number of plants and cut flowers. Private marks and prices can be recorded on this sheet, since it is separate from the

original order, and intended solely for your own private information. In the layout of the objective points, see that all material can be obtained before you promise it to the customer. If you expect to use the palms of another florist in conjunction with your own, find out first whether you can get them on the set date. By planning ahead you will not only reduce the actual work, but insure satisfaction for both yourself and the customer.

It is bad business to try to do decorating on a competitive basis. Keep out of the cut price game on decorations and remain in business to see the wisdom of it. Some big town florists refuse to bid on decorative work. Others have dropped decorations altogether, except to their regular patrons, whom they know will pay a consistent price. On the whole, the wedding decoration is not a thing to be passed on lightly. It is an important and necessary branch of the business. It is profitable only to those who handle it in a businesslike manner. Keep account of the extra costs and charge everything, even the tip to the sexton and the butler. If you do not, you may find that you put in a hard and fast day for nothing. There is, as everyone knows who has experienced it, a keen and lasting sense of satisfaction after the work is completed and you have delighted your customer, and as well a pleasant sense of personal good will in yourself, when you realize that you came out all right on the financial end.

CHAPTER XIV

Decorations in the Hotel and Private Home

Relief Decoration of the Modern Hotel Interior . . . Three Classes of Table Decorations

To keep pace with the style in modern decorating is to know the requirements of the new interior and to profit by the experience of the older one. Coupled with the practical knowledge, there must also be in evidence a fund of resourcefulness and common sense and the ability to promote an opportunity, no matter how small, to a marked advantage.

The old-fashioned interior was either so ornate with the gingerbread style of the period, or so gloomy that much decoration was needed to transform it for a festive occasion. Banks of foliage plants and a profusion of bloom were needed to change the whole interior, so that not a trace of the room in its original form could be recognized.

The later order and present day decorations for hotel and private home call for what we now term relief decoration. By that we mean the floral decorator uses his art and skill to further augment and give the festive

touch to an interior already beautiful in its color and design. He does not cover up or hide the walls with heavy foliage, tightly arranged, but he idealizes the scheme of the interior, takes advantage of the present beauty of the room, and accentuates it until his vision is realized. Floral decorating of the present is not more difficult than that of former years. It is easier to all, except the florist who is unwilling to apart with his old ideas; easier by far to the man who uses his faculties of observation and who has some initiative and versatility.

Formerly, when the Five O'Clock Club gave its big event in the old Bellevue Hotel, the gloomy room was a bower of palms and blooming plants. The ceiling was entirely covered with green and dotted with miniature lights. On the wall back of the speaker was the clock design in red and white Carnations, with the hands pointing to the hour of five. The same design could have been used for a funeral, if taken from the wall and put on a base.

Nowadays the same club meets in the new Bellevue Hotel, on the site of the old. The room is so different that it is like a modern greenhouse compared with the one of years ago. The walls are already in such harmonious and cheerful colors that they form a magnificent background for everything. We just group the plants in lovely arrangements between the draperies so as to relieve and heighten the interior, placing garlands of Wild Smilax in the panels on the walls, etc. The five o'clock emblem of the club is correctly followed in an electrically illuminated dial, with the hands pointing to the hour.

Fig. 80—Ballroom Decoration

An elaborate decoration for a debutante tea. The clusters of colored balloons add much to offset the dark green of the wild Smilax

The dial is banked with a setting of greens, flowers and the national colors.

Table Decorations for All Occasions

One of the most important departments in general decorating is that of table decorations. This work, while separate from the handling of plants and cut flowers in house and hotel, is included in the decoration and is therefore inseparable from it. Rarely do we plan and execute a decoration of the kind referred to in this chapter, that the table is not one of the most important features of the order. It is important that we take up the intensely practical methods of table work, and the mental concept that exercises most influence over it; namely, the color scheme.

Table decorations may be divided into three classes, all having points in common yet differing in detail of arrangement. These three kinds of table decorations are: (1) dinner table; (2) buffet table; (3) banquet table. Of the first class we consider tables for dinners, luncheons and wedding breakfasts. This class calls for the most detail in the choice of design and color scheme. A dinner table is more or less a private occasion, and the decorations, when anything is attempted, have much to do with the success of the entire affair.

The whole center of the table is given over to the floral decorations. One of the main points is to see that the view across the table is unobstructed. If a low centerpiece is used, the line of vision will be above the flowers. If a high arrangement is used, it must be high enough to

allow a view across, below the lowest flowers. Whatever is undertaken on the dinner table must be well done, and the price must be sufficient to do the work right; otherwise, let the other fellow do it.

The second class of table decoration is for the buffet or service table. This one, when completed, may be spoken of as a decorated table, rather than a table decoration. No guests are seated. The table is usually well filled with piles of plates and the supplies of the caterer. The guests view the buffet from a standing position about the room. The decorations should be as high as space permits. Tall vases and high baskets are the proper receptacles.

The third kind is the banquet table. This is also a dinner table, but it does not call for the same detailed treatment as a private dinner. One of the reason is that the price for this work is much lower in proportion to size of the tables and number of guests. The banquet tables may be long and narrow, with a head table running across the ends like a gridiron, or they may be individual round tables, seating eight or ten people each, with one long table for the speakers. Sometimes a horseshoe table is used, but in all cases the decorative principle is the same. An effect is made of low baskets or pans, filled low, with thin glass vases alternating. The greens on the cloth may be hardy ferns, Wild Smilax or Asparagus, according to the available material and the price. General effect is all that is wanted here. There are occasions when banquet tables are executed with as much detail as a small dinner, but they are exceptional.

Choosing the Color Scheme

The most effective color scheme, without exception, is pink. The color radiates joy, laughter, fellowship and good cheer. Women are most beautiful under soft pink lights and the reflections from pink flowers. This is why pink is always the vogue color. Combinations where pink is dominant are even more beautiful. For these, take pink Roses and white Lilac, or the various shades of pink in Spencer Sweet Peas. Yellow is richer in daylight; it pales at night, especially if bright light is used. Candle lights subdue and enrich all colors. The dim, soft light offsets the glare of the white cloth. Violets are hard to handle in color schemes. When used alone they are gloomy and depressing. Red is a jolly good cheer color and will stand more light than any other. Be careful that the general colors in the room are not "old rose" when you use red. Miniature electric lights are often effective in table decoration. A set should be kept on hand with the necessary attachments for connecting so that there will be no danger of blowing out the fuses and putting the whole dining room in darkness. The bulbs can be colored in a few minutes to match any scheme.

Spring flowers are popular in season. A very good color scheme is the pastel combination. It consists of a mixture of the principal pastel shades in a harmonious and contrasting combination. One color sets off the other. For instance, yellow Daffodils and yellow Daisies by themselves are weak and insipid, but in the pastel combinations, the blue and pink of Sweet Peas enrich the color of the Daffodils and Daisies.

Fig. 81—Ballroom Wedding Decoration

Receptacles and How to Fill Them

First in the line of properties for table work are baskets, all of which must have metal linings. Flowers in damp moss will not keep fresh long enough to prevent wilting. Cheap glass dishes, bowl-shaped, are practical receptacles; the cost is so little that in many cases it does not pay to send for the empties. A beautiful sunburst can be made by using one of these for a receptacle. Stretch green twine across the diameter of the dish by going around the bottom and across the top until it is criss-crossed like a loose woven web. Place the dish in the center of the table and place the greens in position. Then begin filling, placing the flowers in the outer edge of the circumference first. Use long-stemmed flowers and try to have the stems reach the water. As you approach the center, shorten the stems and build the center higher by placing some heavy greens between the strings of the dish to block up the flowers. While this arrangement is intended to be flat, it must not be too flat, so be careful to have the center deep enough to give graceful lines to the whole design when finished. No wiring or stemming is necessary; the flowers, being in water, will keep well. If Roses are used in this method the stems must be scraped to get them between the strings.

Children's straw hats make a good receptacle for table work. An ordinary tin pan from the five-and-ten-cent store just fits the crown. On account of the shallowness, it will be necessary to fill the pan loosely with moss and turn a wire on the ends of the stems to keep the flowers in position. Draw a medium wide ribbon around the

crown, just enough to give the brim a nice flare; then note the effect.

For luncheon, a gathering basket with bunches of Sweet Peas which can be given to the guests to wear afterward, is an old idea, but it is a good one for a mid-day informal affair.

Just a word about the proper use of greens. Do not let your green goods stick up at all angles through the flowers. Greens are backgrounds. They are foundations and should never be in evidence.

Booking the Order and Making Use of Good Ideas

"I want to see about getting something for a table," says Mrs. New Customer. The chairman of the banquet committee or the Ad. Club sells you the order this way: "We are going to have our annual on the second at the Marlborough. There will be about fifty covers. We have just $75. Go ahead and give us the best show you can for the money." To book the first order, you may need every bit of knowledge that you possess. On the second you simply need a pencil and pad.

To the first, an immediate suggestion may be a bad one, so you play for time and ask if she has decided on a color scheme. If so, you may then, tactfully and slowly, bring on your suggestive selling talk. Watch carefully for a cue on the arrangement. You rarely get "new ideas" finished and complete, from customers, but we do get some valuable material in chips that can be developed later on. Never allow yourself to be cajoled into doing a piece of work that you know in your own mind is going

to be unsatisfactory. It's nice to have a reputation for things that are novel and new, but that reputation is worth most when it is built on a few things you did well rather than on some freakish knick-knacks displayed as novelties. Whatever you attempt in novelties, let it be done so that it can be easily interpreted. If you wish to carry out the travel idea in a *bon voyage* table, don't make a ship out of flowers. It's absurd and an offense to good taste. A sea of flowers, say Sweet Peas, with a fully equipped ocean liner, to be obtained from a high-grade toy store, would carry the message. Always use flowers wherever possible but don't kill the idea with them.

There is personality in table decorating. While there are certain best ways to handle the mechanical end of the work, the one great principle in arrangement is to make the decorating look as if it grew there. Keep in mind the mental picture of how it is going to look when the guests take their places at the table. By the use of this faculty of constructive imagination you will develop that master touch, that invisible something, that makes your work incomparable.

CHAPTER XV

The Florist Business is One of Impression

A Lecture

By William Cleaver Harry

The conventional never makes a lasting impression. It was a busy day in a certain downtown flower shop, for along with other orders, a prominent funeral had taxed the resources almost to the limit. For this funeral every conceivable combination of flowers had been used, and still there was one more order to fill, a wreath from the Rotary Club. The owner of the store was out to lunch. The store manager, viewing the situation, decided to have the wreath made of the only remaining flowers in stock—yellow and orange Calendulas and some Lavender Sweet Peas. As the wreath was receiving the finishing touches, the proprietor came in. Being a student of the straight lace and conventional, he threw up his hands in horror at yellow and orange flowers for a funeral! "It will never do," he said; "I am afraid to send it!" But it was the eleventh hour and out to the house it was sent! The store owner, himself a Rotarian, attended the service in fear and trembling; but his fears were

groundless, for the committee lauded the choice of colors in the Calendulas and Sweet Peas as a masterpiece extraordinary! The impression was made; it was a good one—a lasting one.

The retail florist business may be correctly listed as one of indelible impression. Everything that the eye beholds, beginning with the color of the stripe on the awning to the show window, the general appearance of the store, the stock in its freshness and arrangement, have much to do with the business value of the impression given, whether it is positive or negative, constructive or destructive in confidence.

Not only these outward signs, but you yourself, and those who assist you, in their speech, mannerisms and deportment, are reflecting, giving off, that same quality in sales impressions. The sale and the willingness to serve in this part of the business begin in the impression stamped upon the prospective customer before a word is spoken. The ability to reflect this harmonious mental activity, together with the quality of the goods, constitute the complete technique of salesmanship.

How to Sell Flowers

In retailing the majority of sales are really made before the customer enters the store. He enters because a decision to buy flowers has been made, and little remains but the work of the florist to complete the transaction. It is now plainly evident that the success, progress and promotion of the industry rest upon the intelligence displayed and used by the florist in these valuable few min-

utes. We know much about the human side of floristry, gained from study, practice and keen observation; the exceedingly important thing is to demonstrate this knowledge.

Always give a smile of recognition before the customer has time to speak. With this smile you may sound an audible greeting or not, just as wisdom directs you. I have heard prospective customers ask, as an opening question, the price of Carnations, just because they thought that Carnations were within their price limit. In many cases they would rather had Roses or a mixed combination, but the florist was not alert! From the standpoint of mutual benefit, there may be some good reason why the flowers asked for are not the most satisfactory, in the long run, to sell. These reasons may be: (1) keeping qualities desired by customer; (2) price; (3) appropriateness; (4) color; (5) distance of delivery. The available stock on hand is always the best reason to sell, from the florist's side of the transaction, in line with the reasons just given. If your store is buying strong on Roses because they are good value on the market, pass along these benefits to the customer whenever possible, in conformity with the five reasons given.

Don't sell a dozen big Roses to a man who has just said he is taking "her" to a dance. Sell him a corsage and along with the transaction a lasting impression that you know flowers should conform to the occasion. Don't suggest Orchids and red Roses to be worn with pink. Don't let that big good-natured fellow buy pink Sweet Peas; lavender is the color, for can't you see, even if

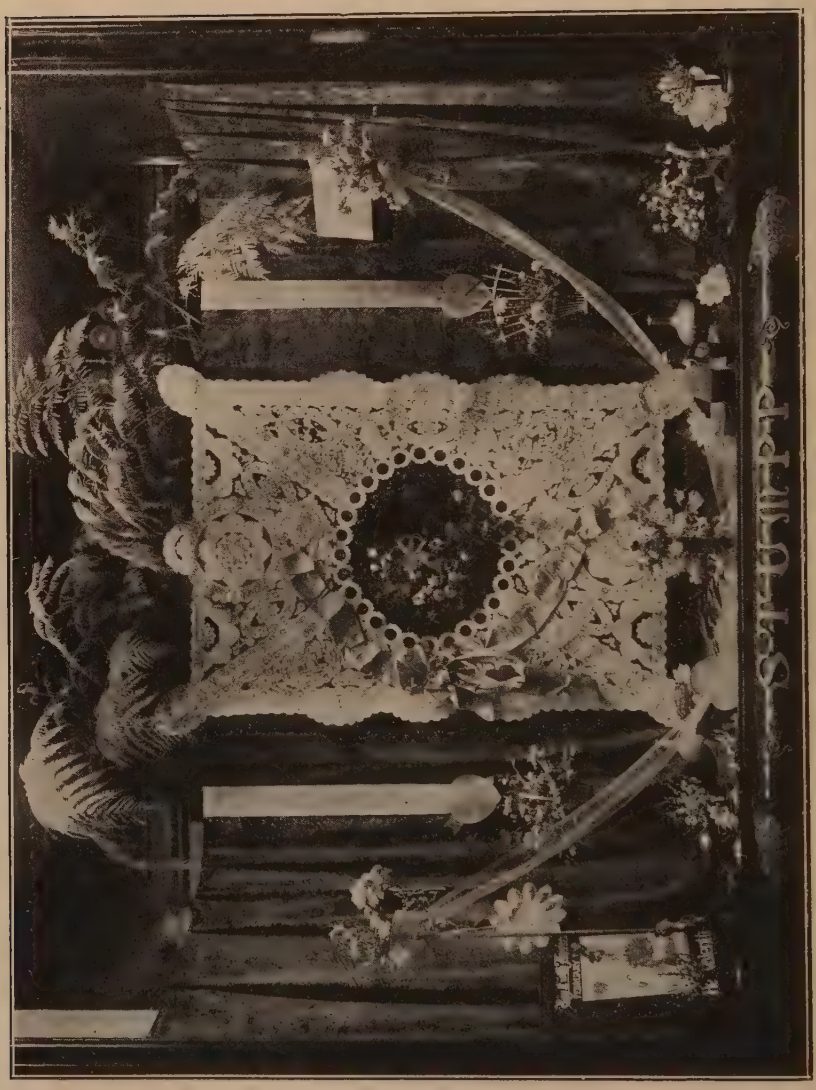


FIG. 82—VALENTINE WINDOW DECORATION

her hat does cover her head, that she has red hair? Prove to them both that Titian beauty is recognized and appreciated by floral artists.

Selling Good Impressions from the Show Window

The prime object of the window display is to sell goods, and not only this, but to advertise, to inspire confidence and to make a good impression that will lead to future business. There are hundreds of people who do not want Roses on the day that you ran the special in the window, but they were favorably impressed with your progressiveness, and have decided where to buy when the occasion comes. The show window then is a salesman. It attracts attention. It arouses interest. It makes sales by exploiting the points of quality, use, price and service, omitting nothing but the sound of the human voice.

What is a Good Location

A show window in a little traveled location is like an ad. in a newspaper with a small circulation. On the other hand, the great crowded thoroughfare may hold a low average of flower buying prospects over the smaller travel of the avenue. But in either case, you must get where the people pass who can and will buy flowers. The selling power of the window depends upon two things: the location and the salesmanship of the man who trims it.

The impression made by your windows may be favorable or unfavorable, or none at all. The favorable im-

pression is one that is sure to touch many points of contact. The unfavorable impression may come from dirty or foggy plate glass, or bad condition of the stock, or the window may be so weak as to be neutral; that is, make no impression at all. It may be so clean and perfect as to hold a mirror to nature itself, yet get but scant attention from a business standpoint. In view of these facts, the question is asked: "What is the best way to dress the window?" We begin to answer this question when we say that there are only two distinct classes of displays. The first is the general effect window, and the second is the business or sales window.

The General Effect Window

Human nature is a funny thing. I have known people to admire the taste and style of a certain florist as displayed in his window and go elsewhere to buy their flowers. The impression they received was one of admiration rather than business. There is such a thing as being too artistic. Not so, however, unless you neglect to make your art salable. The general effect window, which includes all scenic effects, from the waterfall of the old mill to a mass of shipping tags from brother florists which are supposed to unravel the mysteries of the Telegraph Delivery, is weak at the best. It advertises, but often neglects to show just what you wish to sell; like some salesmen, who talk much and explain so fully, that they completely overlook that little detail of getting the order. The general effect window display is a beautiful thing, but let it be strong enough to at least advertise

the presence of a flower shop, leaving no question as to whether it is a florist's store or just a sanitarium for Boston ferns.

The Business Window

"I saw it in your window" is a direct lead to a sale. The business window offers something to sell. It shows the stock arranged in an effective and practical way. Orchids, shown in a corsage arrangement in the setting of a pretty box, offer a more businesslike way of pushing their sale than displaying Cattleya plants in bloom. The corsage bunch suggests their use as gifts, while the plants merely attract attention through curiosity. Combine the two, using the plants as a background to the selling article, and you have an ideal setting which makes an offer of service. Every retailer should make regular use of the business window. By so doing, he will interest a clientele of people who will watch and study his window, just as the women buyers read the advertisements of the big stores every day. Advertising is education, and window advertising is the first page in the book. One large florist, one of the best and longest established in a city in the East, has always maintained that his window is the best advertisement he could have. For many years he spent over $2,000 a year on displays in one window, and it is the showpiece of the city. The goods are never sold out of the window. When the setting is changed, the stock is disposed of privately, and the whole charged to advertising. The store that does the business, that turns its stock quickly, is the store that makes good use of its

windows in sales promotion. People go out of their way to see what is new in the windows of the progressive store. Get them coming on the window displays; get the town interested and they will transfer their interest to your goods, as the occasion to use them comes along. Here is a retailer in a modest sized town, who filled his window with well grown plants of Primula obconica. Each pot was decorated with lavender and white paper and tied with a braid. The complete article cost about 35 cents. The price mark, $1, answered the customer's question, "How much?" While the stock lasted the window was refilled twice on some days. "They just walked out," the proprietor said. They sold because they were presented in a business way. The plants were so attractive that they sold themselves. Contrast this window salesmanship with the dull, general effect window that is seldom changed, that has nothing to say, offers nothing—merely proclaims it is an ordinary old-fashioned florist store, a veritable "floral morgue," where the prices are high, and the size and quality of the stock is low. How could it be otherwise?

Overcrowding and Proper Backgrounds

Stand a little of nearly everything in the window and then use as a background a number of foliage plants, and your display will fail utterly. Good taste and common sense condemn this antiquated method of window dressing, yet 90 per cent of retail stores, both high class and low class, follow this method of stock jamming. The

Fig. 83—Window decoration of baskets and corsages set off by delicately tinted lavender walls of beaverboard and purple chiffon draped about the floor

only difference between one store and another is the lighting, the cleanliness and the quality of the stock.

Overcowding is spoken of as something to be avoided, but it depends on the character of your display as to just what would be overcrowding. In the case of the window filled with Primroses, we find that because the window was generously full, it helped to sell them because of the selection offered. In displaying cut flowers, the use of single flower vases helps the florist offset the high cost of storekeeping, by showing a few flowers to advantage rather than *en masse.*

The importance of proper backgrounds, the lighting and the construction of the window itself have a great deal to do with better window salesmanship, but they can only be treated briefly in this volume. A window that is set back from the building line offers a better view from the sidewalk than one even with the others in the block. A cluster of evergreens on either side and a hedge along the front make an attractive setting and form a recess for the window.

One big point in window trimming is to have everything as close to the glass as possible. This makes a shallow window the best for display. Avoid colors in the floor coverings and draperies that detract from the flowers. A very good floor covering consists of linoleum in solid green or a very small design of dark shades, favoring green.

The value of a continuous effort in window trimming is within the reach of every florist. Advertising may cost, or seem to cost, more than you can afford to spend, yet

you who believe in advertising are perhaps overlooking the show window, the first step in advertising. It will give you quicker returns, with no outlay to speak of, than much copy. Keep the show window working. Make many changes and use display cards with every change.

The Fallacy of the Exclusive Trade

Someone advances the thesis that the window displays of a retail florist should be set in accordance with the kind of trade you are bidding for. If you are catering to the exclusive trade, your window must be esthetic. No idea is more incorrect than this. The exclusive trade! Who are the exclusive trade? The only exclusive people I know of—and I've been up and down the land many times—are those who have gone to the "great beyond." If you are thinking of people of means and social standing as exclusive, they, too, are the same as anyone else, when you know them. Good taste is not exclusive. The plain people are not lacking in appreciation. Do not the advertisements of Wanamaker's, Marshall Field or "The Victor" appeal to all? Or do they just appeal to those who know art, literature or the genealogy of the first families?

The modern florist is a business man. There is no "exclusive trade," except those who voluntarily exclude themselves from our service for reasons, perhaps, that are best known to themselves. Each year finds the business of flowers expanding and taking in more and more of human activities in its service.

Another Impression Made

We cannot close this lecture on impressions without a reference to the most important feature in the florist's store—the refrigerator. This fixture is more than an icebox. It is a display case and therefore first in line in the sale of cut flowers. Again we remind you of the value of right impression.

The minute a customer enters she gets an impression. When you speak she gets another. When the stock is shown, another is recorded, and so on. The whole transaction, up to the last act, the delivery of the goods, is just one impression after another. It is true that some impressions are so feeble that they do not score and decision is deferred. Others are wholly negative, arousing suspicion and prompting the statement, "they don't look fresh"; or a sale is made under a cloud of scepticism and the comeback is more damaging than no sale at all.

It is because we know something of the value of favorable impression that we fix up the exterior and interior of the store; that we do not deliver flowers in a shoe box, or keep the stock we wish to sell in a cave under the sidewalk. The first impression may be the best or—the worst. The store refrigerator speaks volumes on sales impression, and for that reason the modern retailer selects this, the first fixture, with great care, for the store and its business are literally built around it.

The whole business of retailing centers around the refrigerator. It is the first thing a customer sees on entering the store. If it is all that it should be in appearance,

stock and arrangement, the first impression will be a good one. To do business you must have stock to sell. You must have a case that will sell it. The refrigerator is measured by two qualities: (1) Perfect display; (2) perfect keeping qualities.

Attractiveness and Keeping Qualities

Formerly it was the keeping qualities of a cooler that were mainly considered. Nowadays it's the sales value in display that we look at, knowing that the keeping qualities are perfected. Plants will not thrive in a greenhouse of poor construction that does not furnish proper air space and ventilation, nor will cut flowers develop to perfect maturity in a refrigerator that is not constructed to give a perfect circulation and an even distribution of clear, cool air at the right temperature.

A refrigerator is more than a place to store stock. It is a salesman. Even a butcher recognizes this. The refrigerator should be used as a display case, showing nothing but perfect samples. Confidence is the basis of the sale, and one bad impression will offset a dozen good ones and keep confidence in knickerbockers long beyond the age limit. Stores that do a large and varied business have a utility box in the rear or basement for keeping surplus and passe stock. If you use but one, it always pays to install as large a size as possible.

Conclusion of the Art of Floral Designing

If we would get more out of life we must not fail in giving. Truly, the old-fashioned sentiment about flowers

is passing away. The florist business is no longer founded on the flimsy foundation of human emotions. The word merchandising does not seem to be an ideal term, but it does help to being our thoughts to an understanding of what business stands for in giving. Not how much have you made, but how much have you served! Profits and money are incidental, and while they will never lack for him who serves best, real success is greater than the measure of dollars. The slogan of a nationally known military academy in Virginia is this: "Love is King." The reign of the true sense of love in business is everywhere and every day more manifest.

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